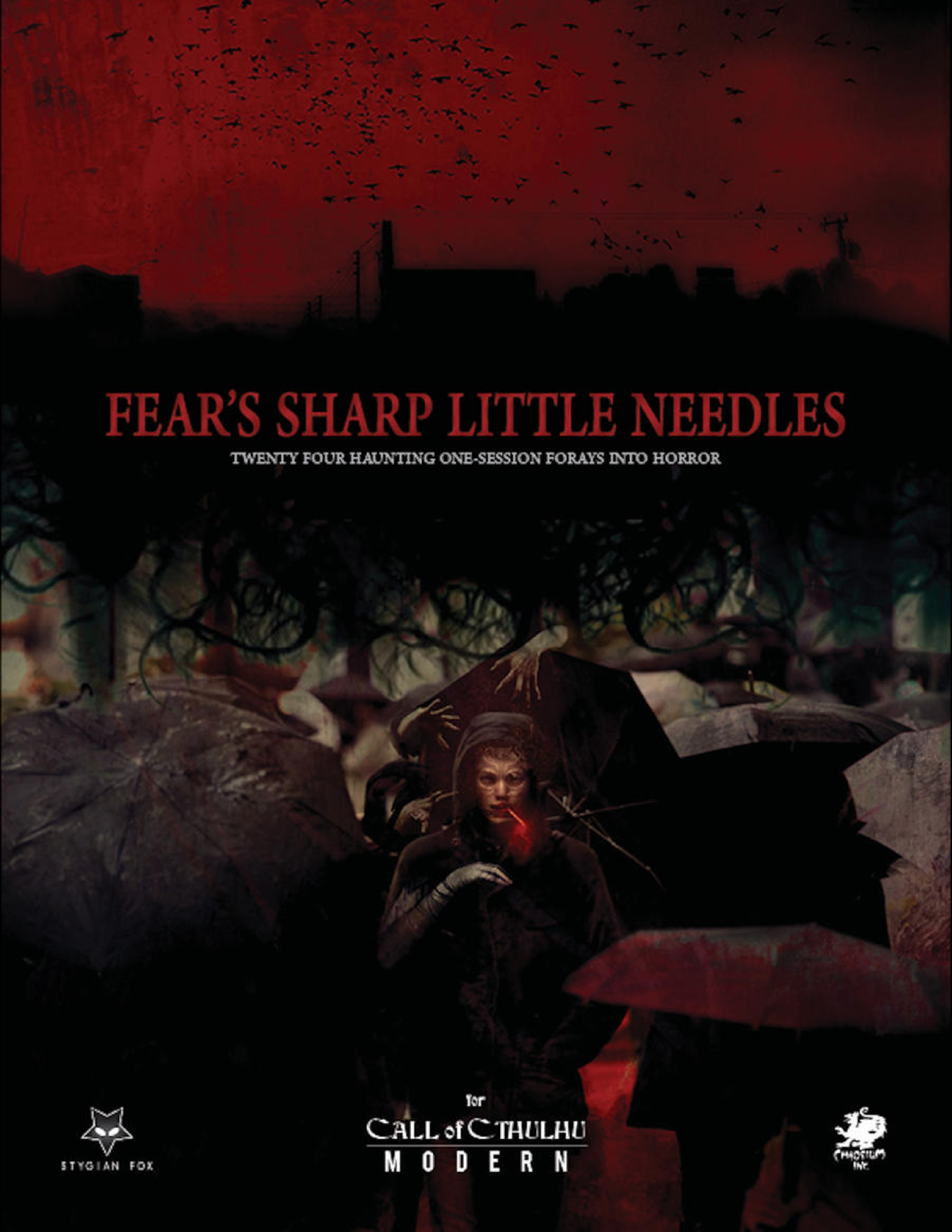

FEAR'S SHARP LITTLE NEEDLES

TWENTY FOUR HAUNTING ONE-SESSION FORAYS INTO HORROR

STYGIAN FOX

for
CALL of CTHULHU
MODERN

CHAOSIUM INC.

FEAR'S SHARP LITTLE NEEDLES

FOR MATURE GAMERS

Dedications

Stephanie: To all those who struggle with their own personal horror every day.

Jeff: To Cookie, who left me alone from house chores long enough.

Badger: To Michael, who continues to inspire me after all these years.

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Published by Stygian Fox, Chester, CH1 3EE, UK.
https://stygianfox.wordpress.com/
Printed on Earth

FEAR'S SHARP LITTLE NEEDLES

TWENTY SIX HAUNTING FORAYS INTO HORROR

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INTRODUCTION

I've been on the receiving end of a lot of needles lately. The underlying reasons have caused me to have to slow down quite a bit, but the needles hurt a lot less, now that I've become acclimated to them. I've spent a lot of time in doctor's offices and phlebotomy labs, giving blood samples and chatting up the same nurses, lab technicians and fellow patients. I try to crack jokes. Not everyone seems to appreciate them.

Needles used to scare me quite a bit. When I was a child, I lived in the Ivory Coast and I had to get regular gamma globulin shots. Big gauge needles in the gluteus maximus, and they hurt. Since then, they have always made me jumpy. Not just needles, but anything poking into a body. The eye poke scenes from Fulci films are among the few things that make me squirm, even now.

This is Stygian Fox's second modern-day scenario anthology for *Call of Cthulhu*. I'd like to take a moment to thank everyone for the overwhelmingly positive reaction to the first one, *The Things We Leave Behind*.

Our second mission statement is a little different. *TTWLB* was a bunch of good scenarios that had been sitting around the authors' various computers for a long time, looking for ways to escape. They were long by design, intended to encourage adaptation and parsing into useful bits, and to inspire your own adventures. This time around, we are exploring the opposite end of the spectrum, at least for the most part. I wanted to reach out to the community of *Call of Cthulhu* authors and encourage as many people as I could to participate—a big clan gathering. We wanted to produce a large collection of short scenarios that you could pick up and run quickly, say as a one-off game or at a convention. Scary and memorable, but not complex or with daunting clue trails. We wanted to keep them as different as possible and let each of the authors follow their own style.

This means, inevitably, that not everything in this book is going to grab everyone. There's no way around that. Look at this as a companion piece to *TTWLB*—similar in tone, with most of the gang back together plus many other experienced authors I've worked with or met over the years, but smaller, sharper, and intended to slide in to one's schedule without too much discomfort.

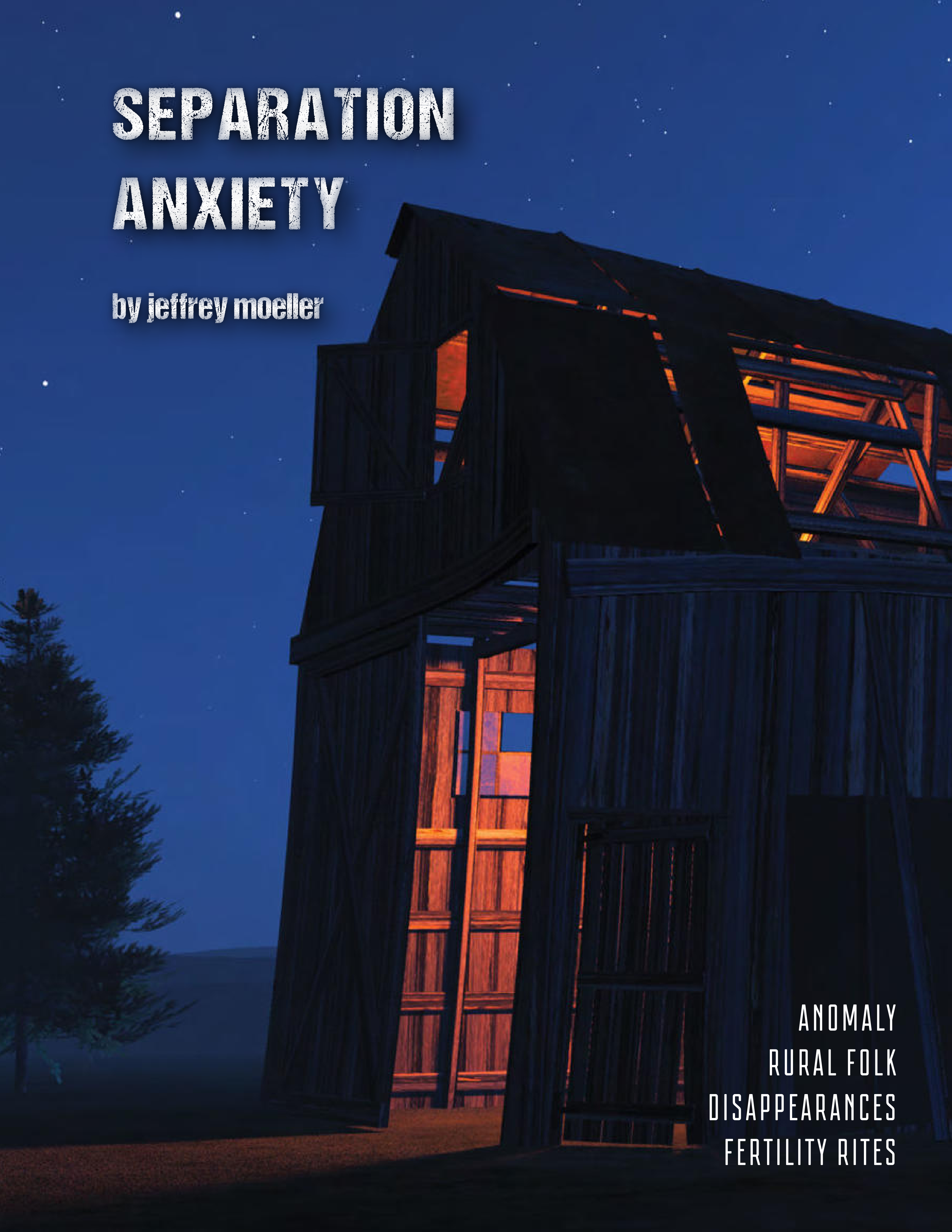
Finally, though, in the grand spirit of the community and collaborative pulp fiction writing, we all shared a needle, which is not normally a good thing to do. Phlebotomy, the last (full-length) scenario, started as a daydream that I had waiting in the lobby of a blood lab early one Saturday morning, with some other chronically ill people, new hires waiting to get drug tested, and a variety of other people who clearly had no desire to be there.

Some of what I said before, in the introduction to *TTWLB*, bears repeating. It is for mature audiences, in the sense that my ten year old daughter doesn't need to be reading this. My twenty-one year old son is another matter (Hi Chris!). Hence the warning label. We do not shy away from the worst things that people can do to each other, and to themselves. These are staples of the horror genre, and the heroic narrative lies in striving to be better and set things right. Even if you fail.

It is not our desire to demean or offend anyone, and we have striven to diversify our range of innocent victims. That said, there are uncomfortable subject matters in this collection that may test a reader's comfort zone. None of us here at Stygian Fox glorify such matters. The only appropriate reactions on the part of your protagonists to such things are horror and a desire for justice, and (as in the real world) such agencies should come to a bad ending or there is no catharsis.

As always, we hope that you enjoy this. If you don't, please tell us why and I'll happily discuss with you what we can do to make the real world better. And thank you very much to our Kickstarter backers; if the first one hadn't succeeded, this one wouldn't exist, period.

-Jeff Moeller, Cleveland, Ohio, January 2017



SEPARATION ANXIETY

by jeffrey moeller

ANOMALY
RURAL FOLK
DISAPPEARANCES
FERTILITY RITES

Introduction

THE FARNSWORTH CLAN WAS A GROUP OF SEMI-HUMAN RECLUSES, INBRED AND TAINTED BY THE MYTHOS, WHO LIVED IN MID-1800S RURAL KENTUCKY. AFTER BEING DISPERSED BY THE AUTHORITIES IN 1845, SOME SURVIVORS, THOSE WHO APPEARED TO JUST BE ODD LOOKING HUMANS, INTEGRATED INTO SOCIETY. MOST DESCENDANTS OF FARNSWORTHS AND OTHER HUMANS ARE INDISTINGUISHABLY HUMAN, BUT OCCASIONALLY, WHEN TWO DESCENDANTS INTERBREED, A TAINTED THROWBACK RESULTS.

The Patriarch of the family, who escaped the 1845 raid, has established a commune for the throwbacks at a self-pick orchard, Farnsworth Farm in rural Darke County, Ohio. Moving carefully, he identifies throwbacks through connections or research, kidnaps them or lures them to the farm, and tortures them into insanity. Some realize their "full potential" from this torture and become core "family" members. Others do not survive the "testing" process. The Patriarch also goes around spreading his genes via bar hookups with his own, unwitting descendants, spreading the taint and hopefully creating more throwbacks to recruit someday.

Beatrice "B.B." Bell is a biomedical researcher at the Case Western School of Medicine in Cleveland, Ohio. She is a tainted throwback and a daughter of the Patriarch, but as far as she knows, she just has some unusual, genetically recessive traits. Her research brought her to The Patriarch's attention. She was forcibly kidnapped and is now being tortured in an oubliette at the Farnsworth Farm. The investigators must find her; whether she can be "rescued" is a decision that you must make.

Involving the Investigators

The investigators may be police detectives who are looking into the disappearance of B.B.; or friends, relatives, private investigators and/or coworkers doing the same. B.B. has been missing for 3 weeks. She was last seen leaving work in the School of Medicine building at Case Western; her purse is missing. Her car was found in its parking spot at work. Her cell phone was found smashed and discarded in the parking lot. No useful video camera evidence or trace evidence from the cell phone were found. There has been no credit card activity or contact from her since her disappearance. Her apartment is undisturbed.

Interview, B.B.'s Friends and Coworkers

These people can relate that she had no known enemies, disgruntled ex-boyfriends, or other likely suspects. (If the investigators include policemen, they will be at the outset of really digging through her background, in an effort to develop a lead.)

Her research supervisor, Dr. Laura Bigsby, can explain B.B.'s recent work. B.B. is a first-year Ph.D. student who was researching her own genetic condition, Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome. This is a rare, recessive, inherited condition, prevalent in certain lines of the Farnsworth and Bell families, and believed to have originated with a male founder mutation arising in Kentucky in the mid-19th century. Only people who inherit two copies of the mutated gene (both descended from the founder) are affected. B.B.'s mother must have been a carrier, as must her father.

Her very worried and innocent mother, Gertrude Bell, sheepishly admits that B.B's father was a guy named James who was a passing bar fling in her youth and whom she lost track of after she fell pregnant with B.B. Her daughter took after her father physically. (***Keeper's Note:*** *James is actually The Patriarch, and he tracked down Gertrude for the purpose of creating a tainted hybrid.*)

Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome ("FBS") is of research interest because of its potential medical applications. Those with FBS are taller and thinner than normal, with very fair skin, black straight hair, and actually black irises. They have excellent reflexes but brittle bones and extraordinarily long, slender digits. Their blood is very quick to clot; some need to take blood thinners as they age. This last condition is what is of potential medical value. This information can come from Dr. Bigsby or general summaries of the syndrome.

B.B. wanted to isolate the particular mutation of her rare condition; only about 20 cases appear in the literature, beginning with the description of a James Farnsworth, born in Kentucky in 1808.

TRACK MARKS

Legends and Folklore of Appalachia

Sanity Loss: 1D3
Cthulhu Mythos: +2 percentiles
Mythos Rating: 5
Study: 1 week
Spells Available: Create Gate of Oneirology, Contact Moon-beast.

This tome rears its head again in **Up Jumped the Reaper**, later in this collection, as well as in **Phlebotomy.** Darke County, Ohio might also be used as the locale for the nursing home in **Walter's Final Wish**.

A picture of B.B. (easily found on social media or gotten from a friend) reflects a not-unattractive young woman displaying all of these unusual physical features.

Digging Through B.B.'s Work Computer

Computer Use rolls on B.B.'s work computer reveal several important clues.

- There is a computer virus on it, a custom designed key logger that activates and sends information to a particular I.P. address if certain words are input or searched. The IP address corresponds to somewhere near Arcanum, Ohio, in Darke County.
- The virus can be traced back to numerous online academic repositories containing research data about FBS.
- The keywords that trigger the virus are "Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome," "Legends and Folklore of Appalachia," and "James Farnsworth." All three of these search phrases can be found in B.B.'s browser cache, within a few days prior to her disappearance.
- Her email reflects that she was granted online access to a copy of a book called *Legends and Folklore of Appalachia* by the special collections department at Miskatonic University, on the day before her disappearance, based on an academic research request.
- There is an encrypted document containing some notes by B.B. about her research. Understanding it requires a successful **Medicine** or Extreme **Language (English)** roll. Success indicates that B.B. was well on her way toward establishing that the vast majority of DNA samples from FBS patients—including her—have a common father, not just a common ancestor, and show numerous signs of inbreeding on the maternal side (as though even the mothers have considerable shared descent). DNA analysis has only been performed in the past several years, but she is alarmed to have isolated DNA from a Bell relative who died in 1910 but nonetheless apparently had the same father as she did. **SAN** loss is 0/1.

Internet Research Regarding Disappearances of Similar Looking People as B.B.

A Hard **Library Use** roll (normal if police databases of missing persons are available) reveals a pattern of about 10 missing persons stretching back 50 years, all with unusual physical descriptions similar to B.B.'s and most from Kentucky or Ohio. A second Hard **Library Use** roll reveals that several of these people went missing a few days after their pictures appeared in the newspaper, online, or on television. The victims' fathers are rarely mentioned or listed as stepfathers. An **Idea** roll suggests that someone is watching for reports of such unusual looking people and then targeting them.

Contacting any abductee's relatives may lead sheepish mothers to reveal a casual encounter with a charming man named James, who had a similar description to their missing son or daughter.

Cthulhu Mythos Research Regarding Similar Looking People

This avenue eventually leads to *Legends and Folklore of Appalachia*, an oral history compilation generated by several Miskatonic U. field historians in the 1920s. The book contains information on the historic Farnsworth/Bell clan, an odd looking family matching the description of FBS hybrids and led by a reputed sorcerer named James Farnsworth. James was reportedly born in Kentucky in 1808, to a single mother and reputed witch. The family was said to be involved in devil worship at their compound in rural (fictitious) Leshay County, Kentucky, until a militia disbursed them. Many Farnsworths were killed but several, including James, escaped. The report of the raid notes that it often took several gunshots to kill a Farnsworth, but that their bones were brittle and that they oozed an odd, thick, blackish ichor when shot.

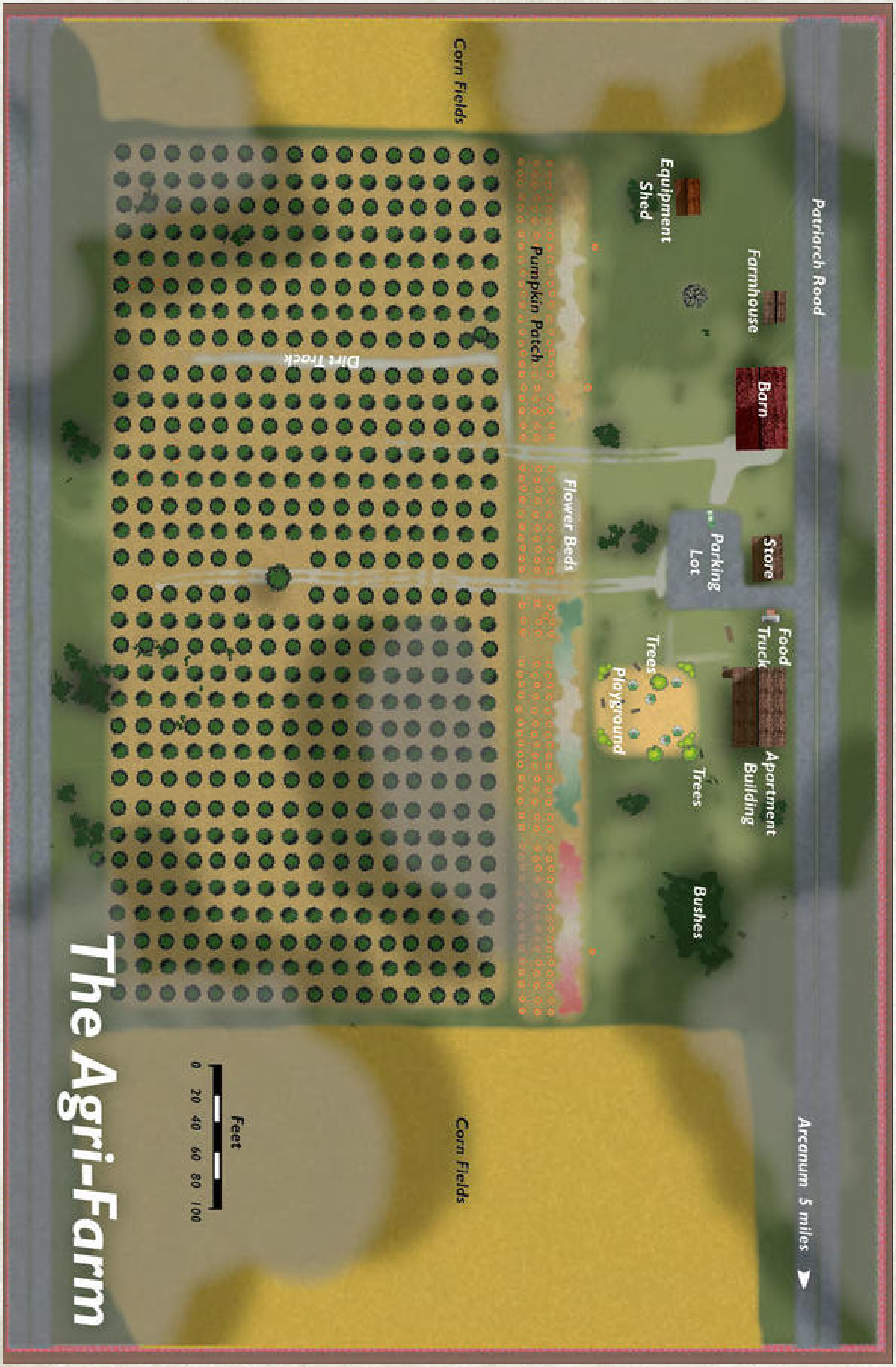
A particularly disturbing passage relates that a distant Farnsworth cousin had to be rescued by the militia from a root cellar, where she had been chained, sliced open and mutilated, and starved for weeks. The imprisoned woman sadly died, which greatly upset the extended family. They described her ordeal as the "rite of passage for all true Farnsworths, separating the wheat from the chaff."

Connections to the Farnsworth Farm

Dozens of people named Farnsworth or Bell live at the same address in rural Darke County, Ohio, about 5 miles outside of the village of Arcanum. Simple Internet research (there is a website) corresponds their address to Farnsworth Farm, an "agritourism" business. It is a working farm that offers seasonal family attractions such as self-pick apples and pumpkins, and hayrides in late summer and autumn. This corresponds to the I.P. address in the virus but is also somewhere the investigators might simply go to ask questions, given the collection of relatives concentrated there. No James Farnsworth is listed at that address (although he does, in fact, live there).

The Farnsworth Farm

The farm is located 5 miles away from the village of Arcanum in Darke County, Ohio, along the Ohio-Indiana border. It is dark at night and there is little light pollution, except for that from the buildings. It occupies a total of a square mile, with about ½ mile of road frontage and running in a rectangle


The Agri-Farm
Patriarch Road
Arcanum 5 miles
Corn Fields
Corn Fields
Equipment Shed
Farmhouse
Barn
Store
Parking Lot
Food Truck
Apartment Building
Trees
Trees
Playground
Bushes
Pumpkin Patch
Flower Beds
Dirt Track
Feet
0 20 40 60 80 100

south for about 2 miles into the countryside. There is only one road fronting; the next road south requires a two-mile jaunt through the orchard and neighbor's corn fields. (In short, it is possible to approach under cover of darkness from the rear of the property, through the orchards.)

All of the buildings (a barn, a storefront, a large farm house, an 8-unit apartment building, an equipment/tractor shed) front the road. The storefront is open March through the end of October, from 10am until 6pm, 7 days a week, selling fruits, vegetables, baked goods, and various crafts on behalf of some neighbors.

The Farnsworths do not engage in any ostentatious displays of cult activity at the farm. The Patriarch has them conduct themselves as normal members of the community. They go to church, send children to public schools, donate to political campaigns and police benefits, participate in 4-H (crop projects only), and do other normal community activities. They are "not trouble" to the community. This is not to say that there are no odd things about them. They avoid dogs assiduously, purport to be vegan, and have no animals whatsoever on their farm. About 2/3 of them bear a strong resemblance to the missing B.B.; the rest are spouses or children. Every last one of them is a thoroughly insane and devoted cultist, however, despite their relative seeming normalcy. They also do not employ any non-family labor at the farm or the store, which is unusual, and the children do not participate in contact sports. Many of them run track, however.

The weirdness, in short, is kept well hidden. Among the weird things are: the horrible scars borne by all of the hybrids under their clothed areas; their practice of human sacrifice to "He Who Walks Behind the Rows" in the orchard on the dark of the moon (cannibalizing the raw remains); a small, well-hidden stash of Mythos artifacts in The Patriarch's bedroom, and of course, the oubliette where "recovered" relatives are "tested" for "reunification."

There are a total of 40 Farnsworths (many with different surnames) in residence, 30 of whom are combatant age.

Approaching Covertly

Given the number of Farnsworths, stealth is the players' best bet, along with bringing a bloodhound. A bloodhound will lock in on two areas. One is an ancient apple tree, huge, dark, and looming, at the center of the orchard; there are dozens of victims' remains buried there. Uncovering these will get the cooperative attention of the police. The other is a corner in the equipment shed, beneath a parked tractor.

Trying to Involve the Police at First

They aren't interested in moving against a respectable family like the Farnsworths without a warrant or hard evidence that B.B. is actually on the property. They might ask James, the patriarch of the family, if he knows anything, which he'll just deny with practiced ease. James looks far younger than his purported age of 60 and actual age of over 200, and is strangely hypnotic and charming.

A Tour of the Farm

Except as noted, it is a largely unremarkable, clean, well-run fruit farm. During open hours, you can buy farm stand goodies, eat food from the food truck (including homemade doughnuts and cider), or if the time of the year is right, pick your own apples for $5/bag. This price includes a hayride on a wagon to the back of the orchard, where the self-pick trees are.

"No Dogs Allowed"

This is clearly marked with numerous signs and the full-on hybrids will avoid dogs like the plague. People with dogs are ordered off the property. Dogs have to be restrained from attacking full-on hybrids.

The Patriarch

He often is not home, off seducing any woman that he can. If he is home and is threatened in any way, all pretense of normalcy breaks down and the Farnsworths try to kill, sacrifice and/or eat any intruders.

Hidden under the floorboards in his room are a human bloodstained, enchanted knife and a copy of his grimoire (containing his spells and past and current plans to expand his family). It makes clear that he is over 200 years old, that B.B. is his daughter, and that many of the people at the compound are his descendants.

The Patriarch's Grimoire

Sanity Loss: 1D3
Cthulhu Mythos: +2/+4 percentiles
Mythos Rating: 5
Study: 1 week
Suggested Spells: Bless Blade, Bless Crops, Cloud Memory, Summon Dark Young.

The Oubliette

This is in the floor of the equipment shed, underneath an obvious trap door on top of which a tractor is often parked. It is kept padlocked. A bloodhound looking for B.B., or blood, immediately heads for it; otherwise, a fair amount of stealthy searching will uncover it (flies hover around it during the day). Inside is a blood-soaked burlap bag, seemingly too small to contain a human being. Nonetheless, it does: a bound and gagged B.B. who has had her arms and legs partially severed to fit in the bag, as well as sustained numerous other deep, mutilating cuts. **SAN** loss is 1/1D4 for the sight.

The idea is that "true" Farnsworths will survive the torture, their wounds will heal, and that the pain will open them to true wisdom. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. Indeed, careful examination in the light will show that B.B.'s wounds have strangely not festered, and her partially severed limbs have begun to fuse back onto her torso. **SAN** loss is 1/1D6 for noticing this.

When B.B. is found, you have two options. She can be grateful and still sane, in which case she will just want to flee to safety and will cooperate in efforts to do so quietly. Or, she has already "turned," and will betray them to the Farnsworths as they make an exit or stab one of them in the back by surprise. (The investigators, if they have done their research well, might anticipate this, and sedate or keep her restrained as they try to escape and get her to psychiatric help. This slows them down and could be noisy as she kicks and struggles.)

The Farnsworths Defend Themselves/Calling 911

It is unlikely, even under the pressure of a few burglars, that the Farnsworths resort to all out violence. This is fortunate, as there are 30 combat-capable ones. Their first impulse is to avoid combat if possible and call the police, who arrive in 1D6+6 minutes, calling for backup as needed.

There are exceptions, however. These involve threats to The Patriarch; finding the oubliette; finding the killing tree; or an all-out police raid. If possible, in light of the numbers, they prefer to sacrifice and eat those they fight, and enjoy a good chase through the orchard. They also enjoy torturing victims, breaking and severing limbs, and chasing people from atop a combine harvester.

If the players call 911 and make allegations of some kind of ongoing violent situation, or present a cooperative B.B. to the police, or bring them evidence of the sacrifice site in the orchard, then the police will, of course, come running. They will likely come with S.W.A.T. and K-9 units, which leads to a battle. If such chaos breaks out, stay focused on the players and their actions.

Note that fighting a full-on Farnsworth highlights their inhumanity; gunshots barely slow them down (a thick, dark ichor oozing out), but they drop like a sack of dirt when hit hard with a blunt instrument.

Rewards and Repercussions

Rescuing B.B. results in an award of 1D6 **SAN**. If The Patriarch escapes, the investigators lose 1D6 **SAN**.

SAMPLE FARNSWORTH FAMILY CULTIST

STR 65	CON 90	SIZ 65	INT 55	POW 65
DEX 60	APP 40	EDU 55	SAN 0	HP 15

Damage bonus: +1D4

Build: 1

Move: 9 (slightly faster than normal human)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 60% (30/12). Variously armed with:

A variety of sharp farming implements (60% of them), such as axes (1D8+2+db); billhooks (1D8+db); or pitchforks (1D8+db)

Firearms (Shotgun) (20% of them), 50% (25/10), 2/round, 4D6/2D6/1D6, 10/20/50 yards, malfunction 00, capacity 5

Chainsaw (20% of them), 50% (25/10), 2D8, malfunction 95-00

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Craft (Agriculture) 50%, Credit Rating 10%, Cthulhu Mytho05%, Dodge 50%, Drive Automobile 30%, Language (English) 55%, Listen 50%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Natural World 50%, Occult 25%, Operate Heavy Machinery (Tractor) 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%, Survival (Forest) 50%.

Defenses: Take minimum damage from firearms and cutting/piercing attacks, and will eventually regenerate limbs and lost body parts at the rate of one HP per day unless killed, but take double damage from blunt instruments.

Nationality: American

Age: varies.

Spells: none.

Indefinite Insanity: Psychopathic murderers, all of them.

Notes: This is a typical cultist. The Patriarch has INT of 80, EDU of 80, APP of 80, Charm of 50% and Credit Rating of 60%, and knows the following spells: Bless Blade, Bless Crops, Cloud Memory, and Summon Dark Young of Shub-Niggurath.

UNDERTOW

by simon brake

MANIFESTATION
DEPRESSION
NYARLATHOTEP
HIDDEN ENEMY

Introduction

Novelist Justin Hayes hasn't written anything in several years, but finds his muse and begins writing again when Nyarlathotep uses the author's depression to weave a darker subtext into his stories. As a focus for this corruption, the Crawling Chaos manifests as a black dog to those around the author.

Involving the Investigators

Hayes has a new book that has crept onto various bestseller lists and is, inevitably, reviewed in magazines, on TV, online. One way or another, the investigators will stumble upon *Undertow*.

The book tells of Niki Fisher, a young actress in Los Angeles, who finds life increasingly overwhelming whilst others achieve success around her. After trying various radical remedies to keep herself afloat, she joins a new age cult through which she learns mantras and philosophies which, to seasoned investigators, appear lifted from familiar Mythos tomes. Dream sequences further explore these themes. As the reader witnesses Niki's downward spiral, it's hard not to feel sympathy for her, even as she convinces herself that she is being manipulated by external forces. In a final twist, with Niki having fled Los Angeles, we learn that maybe she was being manipulated after all.

There are enough red flags raised to warrant investigation by those familiar with the Mythos.

Undertow, by Justin Hayes

In English. SAN loss 0/1, as it is presented in a fictional context; +1% to Cthulhu Mythos; 10 hours to read.

If Lovecraft and his contemporaries are known authors and inspirations in your game world, a novel that mentions the Cthulhu Mythos isn't altogether unusual. Instead, appeal to the investigators on a personal level. Dream sequences in *Undertow* uncannily mirror recent investigations or dreams of theirs, or minor characters are named after PCs (or NPCs). There's an additional 0/1D4 SAN loss for anyone who reads about themselves or their non-public past deeds in *Undertow*.

About Hayes

Justin Hayes is a prolific horror writer who began his career writing for television and cinema. Originally from Bristol, UK, he worked for several years earning a reputation as a scriptwriter in Los Angeles before trying his hand as a novelist. In over twenty years, he has written thirty-two books, including the popular *Born of Shadow* series (about James Kinsey, a vampire P.I. in 1930s Los Angeles) and three collections of short stories.

In 2013, Hayes suddenly dropped out of sight. News sources speculated that his marriage had ended badly; others suggested that he'd had a serious drunk driving accident, but the official word was that he was getting away to concentrate on his writing.

The novel *Undertow* is said to be the result of this time away.

Hayes is not easy to find. His agent, Steve Morton, doesn't give away his details unless heavily leaned on, although if they are legitimate journalists, he will arrange an official interview. Interviews require them to physically visit Hayes at his home. Alternatively, his wife, Sarah Hayes, can still be found in Los Angeles. She admits that they separated after she struggled with his evident depression. Soon after the separation, Hayes ran his car off the road. This can be confirmed through police records (no drink or drugs were involved). She hasn't seen him in years but also has his address.

Visiting Hayes

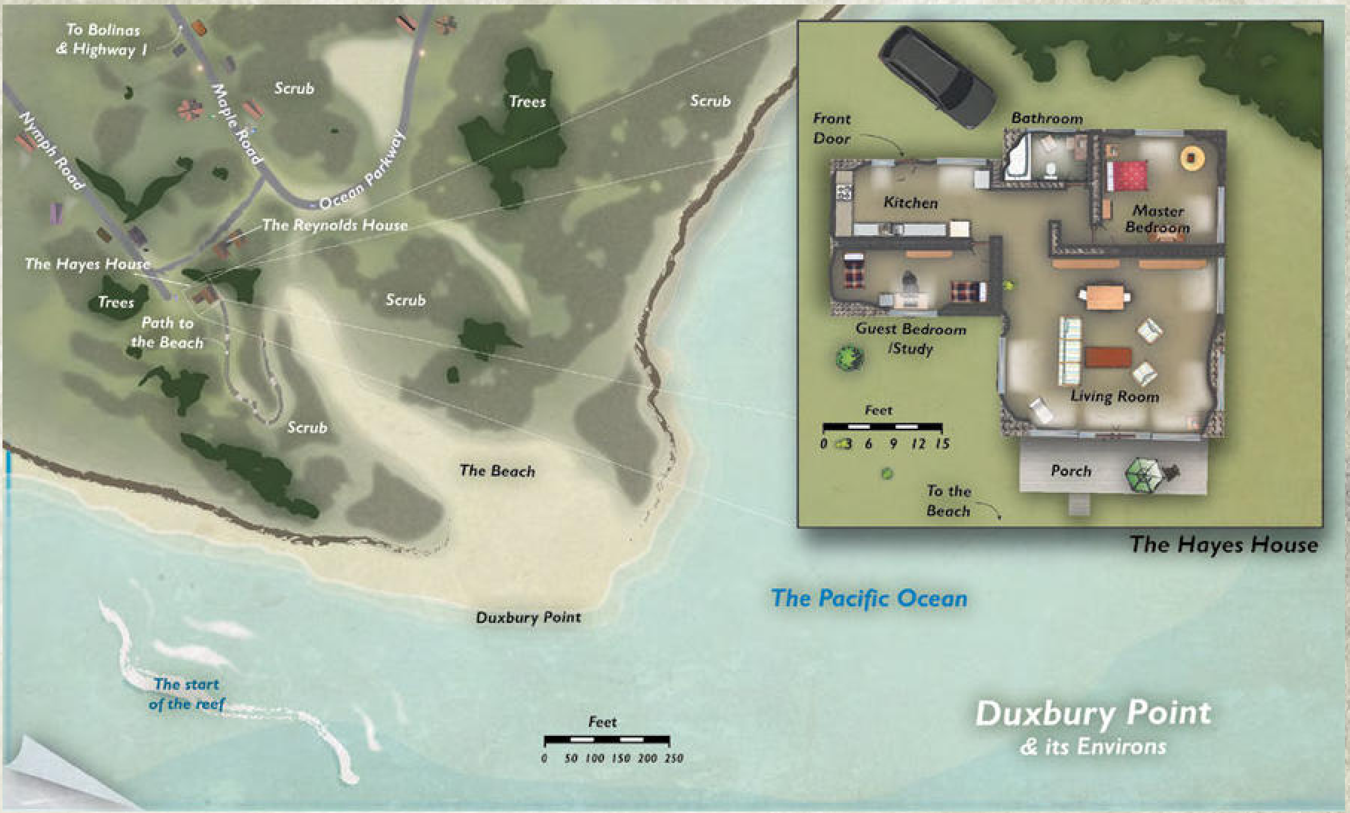
Hayes lives in a small community called Bolinas, just over an hour's drive north of San Francisco. From Highway 1, a road around Bolinas Lagoon takes you into town, although there are no signposts. The community is well known for its reclusive inhabitants.

Driving in on Olema Bolinas Road, the investigators find a small picturesque beach town, containing a number of surf shops. Those looking for food or lodging can find them easily — the Coast Cafe and the Grand Hotel are recommended online. The quieter residential area where Hayes lives is reached via Terrace Avenue, a road heading west along the coastline until it reaches roads lined with trees, bushes and fences, with houses few and far between. The long Elm Road runs through the center of this community, off of which is Maple Road (past Laurel Road, before Nymph Road).

Hayes lives at the end of Maple Road, overlooking Duxbury Point where it juts into the ocean, cutting off Bolinas Beach. Just beyond the driveway to his house, a steep trail leads down to the beach. When investigators approach the house, a black Labrador Retriever drops the red ball that it's been playing with, yips, and scampers away, disappearing around the back of the bungalow. There are two entrances to the building: the single door that greets the investigators as they approach from the driveway, and the French doors on the far side.

Meeting Hayes

Hayes will likely be home, especially if expecting visitors. He's friendly, if a little reserved, and offers the investigators coffee when they arrive, food if they stay longer. The house itself is small and sparsely furnished. What appears to be the front door opens up into the kitchen, which leads into the main part of the house, devoted to the open living room. A bathroom and Hayes's bedroom off a small corridor linking the kitchen to the living room, whilst a guest bedroom, which serves as


To Bolinas & Highway 1
Nymph Road
Maple Road
Scrub
Trees
Scrub
Ocean Parkway
The Reynolds House
The Hayes House
Trees
Path to the Beach
Scrub
Scrub
The Beach
Duxbury Point
The start of the reef
Feet
0 50 100 150 200 250
The Pacific Ocean
Duxbury Point
& its Environs
Front Door
Bathroom
Kitchen
Master Bedroom
Guest Bedroom /Study
Living Room
Feet
0 3 6 9 12 15
Porch
To the Beach
The Hayes House

a study, sits immediately south of the kitchen. South facing french doors in the living roomlook out over a porch towards the sea. Hayes has no TV but soft music plays through the house from an Apple laptop.

He'll happily chat to them about his life and work but easily gets distracted, as if his mind is elsewhere. Often, he stares out to sea, listening to the waves. His memories of Los Angeles are of it being increasingly difficult and depressing. He is genuinely sad about his wife leaving him but is enthusiastic about *Undertow*.

When talk turns to *Undertow*, Hayes explains how he based it on life experiences and some vivid dreams which he started to have after reading a book of macabre poetry. He'll fetch them his copy of *Azathoth and Other Horrors*, by Edward Pickman Derby, but its contents are insufficient to explain all of *Undertow*'s references, especially any information about the investigators. He is surprised to learn of any correlation and insists that he was just creating fiction. **Azathoth and Other Horrors:** 1 week to study/2 hours to skim; 1/1D4 **SAN**; +4% to Cthulhu Mythos; Regular English check.

Hayes confirms that he lives alone: "just me and my black dog…." It's important to note that Hayes has no dog, black Labrador Retriever or otherwise. He is referring to his depression. Hayes is unaware that The Black Dog, a projection of his depression made manifest by Nyarlathotep, actually exists. If investigators mention it to Hayes, he will misunderstand, or assume investigators are making a joke. Persistence convinces him the investigators are mocking him, and he will testily ask them to leave.

Hayes happily shows investigators around his garden and the beach. He may invite friendly guests to stay overnight; there are two single beds in the guest bedroom, and a couple of futons in the living area.

There are plenty of books in the guest bedroom. Aside from Azathoth and Other Horrors, there are books about script writing and photography, popular horror novels and novels of a nautical theme. These include *Snarleyyow, or the Dog Fiend*, by Frederick Marryat, a 19th century comic novel about a treacherous sea captain and his vicious dog, Snarleyyow. This book has no (apparent) Mythos connection, but might help the investigators make the Nyarlathotep connection.

The Beach

Bolinas Beach is a typical Californian beach, although more secluded than many. The sound of waves on the beach is soothing, almost hypnotic. If here, Hayes admits that he finds it calming, that he can sit here for hours, and sometimes imagines himself adrift and at peace beneath the waves. Surfers frequent this beach, although they tend to stay clear of Duxbury Point because of the nearby reef.

Neighbors

Hayes' immediate neighbor, Michelle Reynolds, is an actress of yesteryear who now spends her days painting. Friends with Hayes, she hasn't noticed anything odd about him. She has met with the friendly Labrador that she assumes is his, though she'll struggle to remember seeing Hayes with it. If it is suggested that he has no dog, she'll shrug. There are plenty of reclusive people living out these ways.

Michelle has a copy of *Undertow* on her shelf, but admits

ME AND MY SHADOW

Winston Churchill famously referred to his depression as a black dog and Hayes borrows this idea. However, many of his books use different symbolism for depression. The 'undertow' of his new book represents feelings of losing control, senses dulled against the brighter world above. *The Born of Shadow* books suggest a similar theme, of feeling cut off from the light. A successful **Psychology** roll confirms this and he may acknowledge his use of symbolism to friendly enough investigators.

she hasn't read beyond the first dream sequence. It's not really her thing. On an easel sits a painting of Duxbury Point at dusk, a fiery sun setting behind it in a red sky. The painting isn't finished as Michelle, "can't get the waves right." She has repainted them several times.

The Dog Returns

The investigators will inevitably encounter The Black Dog again, though often it finds people on their own. It may be on the beach, sniffing around outside, or curled up on their bed when they retire for the night. It avoids appearing when Hayes is around as, technically, he is the only one that can permanently dispel it.

The Black Dog's relationship with Hayes is symbiotic: it siphons away negative thoughts in exchange for fantastic dreams which inspire his work. While this has allowed Nyarlathotep to plant terrifying truths into the public domain, there's another effect as well. Those negative thoughts that The Black Dog takes begin to affect those around it. Unless anyone deliberately avoids The Black Dog, they begin suffer its curse. It's difficult to avoid, as it acts as an affectionate dog would: following investigators around, resting its head in their laps, and dropping its ball at their feet as if it wants to play. If they stay overnight with Hayes, it may sleep in the same room.

Investigators are not the only ones at risk. The neighbor is already affected, as might be anyone who's encountered it on the beach.

As day turns to night, those who are suffering The Black Dog's curse start to relax. The effects are subtle and information given to such investigators should be presented as if through a medicated haze. The effects are strongest after sunset and anyone who is on the beach after sunset is in danger.

Night Falls

The scenario can be played out over one or several nights, if necessary, but ultimately the characters should experience the lure of the sea and/or confront Hayes about The Black Dog.

As investigators go to bed, wherever they end up, ask for **POW** rolls. Regardless of the results, those who have avoided The Black Dog sleep soundly. They won't experience the night's events unless woken up. All other investigators will dream.

A successful **POW** roll means that the person dreams of calming waves on the beach, but sleeps through the night. Failed **POW** rolls mean the person finds themselves having nightmares, echoing the Mythos-laden dreams depicted in *Undertow*. **SAN** loss is 0/1.

Whoever failed their **POW** roll by the greatest degree will then awaken suddenly, to find himself safely in bed, the distant sound of waves crashing on the beach (if no one failed a **POW** roll, the following events could occur to an NPC). Light filters in through the window, from a moon and stars that shine particularly bright. The sky is cloudless. If the window is open, a pleasant breeze can be felt. The world around them seems strangely magical. This surreal state is not a dream. The individual is still in slow-wave sleep, commonly associated with night terrors and sleep-walking.

If the investigators are not a threat to Hayes, the sleepwalker will tap into Hayes's desire for peace, but in particular, the peace he associates with the crashing waves, now more hypnotic than ever. The sound doesn't so much entice people towards the sea as it discourages them from doing anything else. If the investigator gets up, he must make a successful **POW** roll in order to return to bed. If he wishes to rouse another character from their sleep, use his phone, head inland, or do anything else that distracts them from the ocean, they need to make a successful **POW** roll. If any of these rolls are failed, the victim is unable to act as desired, freezing on the spot for a moment, lost in the sound of the waves. The Black Dog can also appear, coaxing the sleepwalker out towards the beach, scratching at the door and then running out into the night.

If the investigators are a threat to Hayes, then the dream plays on the sleepwalker's phobias, manias or insecurities. They'll hear an increasingly disturbing noise (tailored to suit the individual), initially lost behind the sound of waves but getting louder. The sleepwalker begins to hallucinate; it becomes obvious that another investigator is the source of these noises and clearly dangerous. How the sleepwalker deals with it is up to them.

If the sleepwalker is determined to confront Hayes, or take on The Black Dog, the room darkens as the creature takes on an increasingly menacing appearance. Fur bristles into jagged spines, eyes turn black, and multiple rows of teeth sprout from snapping jaws. The investigator must make a **SAN** roll, with a 1D4/1D10 loss, and then blacks out, coming to where they fell at sunrise. The Black Dog, when encountered in the day, will be perfectly normal again.

As noted above, if none of the investigators succumb, you can have an NPC be discovered missing come morning, only to be found washed ashore when the tide rolls in later, eyes staring but looking strangely peaceful. Alternatively, someone might try to kill the investigators in the night.

The Beach at Night

Between sunset and sunrise, anyone cursed by The Black Dog and who finds themselves by the sea is in peril. They are transfixed by the sight and sound of the waves, the spray of cool water in the air. Emphasize how peaceful the scene is, how beautiful the water looks on this magical night. Ultimately, the choice to walk into the sea and beneath the waves must be their own. Turning away requires a **POW** roll as before, however, and they may stand there all night until the tide rises and drags them down. Those submerged near Duxbury Point are caught by the undertow and dashed against the nearby reef. Any witnesses cursed by The Black Dog need to make a successful **POW** roll to even convince themselves that their friends disappearing under the waves is bad. They may even be inclined to follow.

No Longer by the Beach

A spellbound sleepwalker too far from the sea will hear echoes of the waves from other dangerous sources. Hallucinations will ensure the victim doesn't see anything wrong as, for example, they follow the background rumble of vehicles into the middle of traffic.

Confrontation

A confrontation with Hayes will likely happen if the investigators consider him dangerous or responsible for the disappearances/dreams. Nyarlathotep doesn't want Hayes dead, because of his ability to disseminate forbidden knowledge, but if an investigator seems a likely surrogate, Nyarlathotep is happy to sacrifice Hayes. Accusing Hayes of involvement with events, or telling him about The Black Dog forcefully, only panics him. He insists that he isn't responsible and that there is no "Black Dog." He'll attempt to lock himself in his bedroom and call the police. They can try to stop him, but he is simply a frantic man terrified that the investigators are crazed and violent. If they tell Hayes that The Black Dog is in their dreams, then he's more likely to listen, as he too sometimes dreams of old 'Snarleyyow.' They'll struggle to convince him that it actually exists, but the idea eats away at him.

If anyone attacks Hayes himself, The Black Dog senses that he is a lost cause and will turn up as if to defend its master. To Hayes, of course, it demonstrates that The Black Dog actually exists. If convinced that The Black Dog is real, Hayes tries to get away, to catch his breath, to calm down. If possible, he'll sit on the beach and watch the waves. Unless the investigators keep a close eye on him, he will soon attempt to find peace beneath the waves, killing himself.

The Black Dog itself is easy to temporarily defeat, although the investigators may learn that it doesn't stay dead for long. It simply reappears, when and as necessary for dramatic tension, until Hayes is either confronted and comes to believe in it (after which point, it can be "killed" until it reattaches itself to someone else), or Hayes is killed himself.

Conclusion

The scenario is over, for the most part, if either The Black Dog is finally defeated or Hayes dies. However, the investigator that Nyarlathotep considers most promising will be visited later that night, while alone. He assumes the form of a man, pale skin, jet-black hair combed back, a black suit and shirt. He'll walk slowly towards whomever he considers Hayes' replacement, the most likely to further spread details of the Mythos. The Pale Man is easy to hit, but attacks burst through him as if he were liquid mercury, retaining his form while black globules float into the air. A single attack stops him; he'll glance at the hole now leaking oily black fluid into the air with amusement, and then, as he disintegrates into a swirling whirlpool of droplets that shoots up into the night sky, his mocking laughter echoes. **SAN** loss is 1D4/1D10. Nyarlathotep now counts this person as one of his own, while they're useful. One day, should they live long enough to retire, they'll have a Black Dog of their own.

Rewards and Repercussions

If The Black Dog is defeated, everyone gains 1D6 **SAN** (although they lose it, plus an additional 1D6 **SAN**, if they realize that The Dog has just moved on). If Hayes never publishes details of the Mythos again, they gain 1D6 **SAN** (if he dies, however, counter this with a 1D6 **SAN** loss).

JUSTIN HAYES, Horror Novelist

STR 45 CON 50 SIZ 55 INT 65 POW 65
DEX 55 APP 60 EDU 55 SAN 45 HP 10
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 6

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10)

Skills: Art (Literature) 60%, Art (Photography) 40%, Credit Rating 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 08%, History 50%, Language (English) 70%, Language (French) 40%, Library Use 50%, Occult 40%, Psychology 40%..
Defenses: None above base.
Nationality: English
Age: 52
Education: Equivalent to high school in the U.S.

THE BLACK DOG ("Snarleyyow")

STR 60 CON 60 SIZ 70 INT 50 POW 100
DEX 90 HP 13
Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 16 (unnaturally fast for a dog)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 80% (40/16), 1D6+db (claws, biting and rending)

Dodge 20% (10/4)

Armor: None.
Skills: Spot Hidden 70%, Listen 80%, Track 90%.

SINS OF MY YOUTH

by oscar rios

TEMPORAL ANOMALY
STALKER
DESTINY
APOCALYPSE

Introduction

In this scenario, one of the investigators, chosen by the Keeper, becomes the focus of a mysterious and murderous attacker. The attacker appears as a large, hulking, homeless person, wearing multiple layers of filthy clothing, hoods, and hats to disguise their overall appearance and gender. The attacker is very cunning and seems to know everything about his target, and a great deal about the other investigators. The attacker uses this inside information to his advantage whenever possible, especially in determining the target's whereabouts and choosing the ideal moment to strike.

The attacker makes three attempts on the investigator's life, giving no real reason as to why. After the initial attack, the figure flees and seems to vanish once out of line of sight.

If the second attack fails to immediately kill the targeted investigator, the murderous lunatic presses the attack until driven off. He slowly dematerializes with each point of damage suffered, until he reaches zero hit points. Then he vanishes.

On the third and final attempt, the attacker doesn't flee, vanish, or dematerialize. This time, once reduced to zero hit points, his dying body remains. With his final breath, the strange figure tries to explain his actions, but his cryptic warning and startling appearance only deepens the mystery, until he is horrifically silenced.

Keeper Tips

This scenario can be run during another longer scenario, as a strange and murderous series of interludes not connected to the primary narrative. The scenario may also be run in small parts between longer scenarios, with the three mysterious attacks happening weeks, months, or even years apart. The scenario could also happen all in a single night, as the mysterious attacker is vanquished several times, only to reappear stronger and more determined.

The Truth

The mysterious attacker trying to murder one of the investigators is a time traveler from 30 years in the future. In this future, the End Times have come. What few humans survive are slowly becoming tainted, mutating into inhuman servitors in the service to one of the many Great Old Ones now ruling the Earth. This mysterious figure lived through the end of the world, and knows how everything went wrong. Their only hope is to change the past and save mankind.

The reason he knows the investigators so well, and everything about his target, is that the strange, filthy and crazed looking figure is actually an older version of the target investigator, trying to kill himself in the past. Somehow, through action or inaction, this investigator is responsible for something of key importance to bringing about the End Times.

CAN THE ATTACKER CHANGE THE PAST (OR THE FUTURE)?

This is something that you will need to decide up front, choosing between two competing theories of time travel. The first one, the Novikov Self-Consistency Principle, posits that whatever happened, happened. The time traveler will inevitably fail to kill his earlier self, because while time travel is possible, the past cannot be changed in any way that disrupts the future. If the time traveler truly succeeded in killing his past self, he would not have survived to time travel, so he must fail sufficiently to permit the future time travel to somehow occur. In other words, everything that happens happened, and the attacker remembers how he failed, because his past self does. He is going through the motions, hoping against hope to somehow change a past that cannot be changed. If it seems like some detail has been changed, then the time traveler's knowledge or recall of it was inaccurate or imperfect. The warning he means to deliver was always delivered but simply did no good.

The second one posits alternate dimensions and divergent timelines. Assuming multiple realities, the attacker cannot change his own personal timeline, but might be able to create a separate reality where the inhabitants of that separate reality fare better. In this case, the time traveler has not really traveled to his own past (which is impossible), but to another parallel reality. Returning to the future, however, the time traveler's own personal future would be unchanged. Welcome to the nihilism of the Cthulhu Mythos.

In the end, once the attacker is defeated for a third time, all this becomes known to the investigators (see **Confessions**, below). However, the dying time traveler won't have long to explain anything in detail (see **A Dog and Its Bone**, below).

The Filthy Lunatic

The Time Traveler should be one of the investigators, aged thirty more years, moderately mutated and infused with mystical abilities. His mind is slowly slipping away; as his body changes to better serve the Great Old Ones so too is his mind twisted into willing servitude. He knows that he has little time left, and soon, any freewill shall vanish. He has, however, developed the fantastic ability to shift through time (or perhaps dimensions, depending on your theory of time travel; see the box above). Control over these shifts is spotty at best.

The Time Traveler is a human chimera, a mixture of seemingly random animal forms upon a human form. One arm appears as an enormous insect appendage, with a mass of squirming tentacles at the end forming a hand and fingers. One leg has an elongated arch on the foot, much like a cat or dog, giving them a strange wobbling gate. His skin oozes in places and in the same sections it is covered in thick reptilian scales, while elsewhere it appears as chitinous, lobster-like plates. However, his voice, face, and especially his eyes are clearly recognizable as an older version of the targeted investigator. All of these features are hidden from casual view, under multiple layers of rancid smelling clothing. As mentally unhinged homeless persons are generally ignored by the greater public, it becomes the perfect disguise.

Skills and Stats of the Time Traveler

Keepers should make a copy of the targeted investigator's character sheet, and use it as the foundation for statting out the Time Traveler. Every skill that he possesses should be increased by 3D10% points, to a maximum of 95%. The skills of **Computer Use**, **Disguise**, **Spot Hidden**, **Sleight of Hand**, and **Stealth** are increased by 4D10%, to a maximum of 95%. **Cthulhu Mythos** is raised to 75%, and **Sanity** is reduced to zero.

The investigator's physical attributes are changed in the following ways, with scores above 100% allowable: STR is raised by 40%, CON is raised by 50%, SIZ is raised by 20%, and POW is raised by 20%. DEX, EDU, Luck and INT are unaffected. APP is now zero and seeing the true form of the Time Traveler clearly costs the viewer 1/1D8 **Sanity** Points.

Weapons and Methods of the Time Traveler

The Time Traveler favors whatever sorts of weapons he did in his youth. If he was an expert rifle shot, a keen hand with a knife, or deadly with a handgun, he is certain to acquire such weapons before making a move on the target. If the targeted investigator has skills in explosives, handling toxins, or is mechanically savvy, the Time Traveler uses those skills. He may plant an improvised explosive device, lace a package or food item with poison, cut the brake line on a car, or block the carbon monoxide vents on the home's furnace. (Of course, he has the security code, and perhaps even an old set of keys, avoiding any sign of forced entry.) Keepers should think about the investigator and ask themselves, "if they were going to kill someone, how would they do it?" In the end, the target should feel that he was fighting his own future self, and that his actions were believable; "That's how I would have done it."

Abilities of the Time Traveler

The mutated nature of the Time Traveler grants him 4 points of armor. On the first trip to the past, he has enough power to suddenly vanish, returning to his own time (or dimension). If he sees his future unchanged (which will hold true regardless of the theory of time travel involved), he realizes that his attack failed. Then he returns to the "past" to make another, more sustained attack. However, this time, he no longer has the power to easily return to his own time. If damaged during this trip, he begins to dematerialize, being forced back to the present as his physical form is unmade in the past. He then only has the power to return to the past one last time, and can never return again. This third trip becomes an all or nothing mission and the Time Traveler makes every effort to achieve his goal of making some difference.

WHAT HAPPENS IF AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT SUCCEEDS ON THE FIRST OR SECOND ATTEMPT?

It is certainly possible that a Keeper who does not fudge dice for dramatic effect will be confronted with the situation where the targeted investigator is killed by his future self. If this happens, then regardless of your theory of time travel, the Traveler is in for a rude awakening. Nothing has changed in his own personal timeline. Then what? You have several options:

- The Time Traveler realizes that he had the wrong target, and/or that killing his past self made no difference. He decides that the best course is to warn his past self. He goes back in time again, and calls an ambulance crew, which arrives just in time to haul his past self back from the brink of death, perhaps horribly injured and subject to a lengthy hospital stay. Then, later, proceed to the end game warning.
- The Time Traveler concludes that more death is necessary and that some other investigator also needs to be eliminated. Proceed as outlined with a second target.
- Combine these two, since they are both consistent with "getting it right."

The First Attack

The Time Traveler tries to keep things simple at first. This attack should seem to be some random act of violence, the act of a mentally unhinged person against a seemingly innocent victim. Keepers should keep in mind that the Time Traveler knows everything about his target, his routine, where he lives, where he works, the car he drives, his passwords and combinations. This knowledge should make it extremely easy to plan an ambush. After making this attack, the mysterious figure flees and vanishes.

Some possible attacks might be:

- Pushing a dumpster into the path of his car or hurling a shopping cart off an overpass to cause an accident (**Drive Auto**, Hard success to avoid damage, a success causes 2D10 points of damage, a failure causes 4D10 points of damage).

- Shoving the target into oncoming traffic or the path of an approaching train, then running away (**DEX** roll, with failure causing 8D10 points of damage).
- Hurling acid, lye, or gasoline at the target and then trying to set the target on fire before fleeing (2D10 points of damage, can be avoided by **Dodge**).

The Second Attack

This next attack should be more direct and more in the style of the Time Traveler's own methods. Home invasion, sniping, armed ambush, and acts of sabotage and/or direct physical attack are all possible. The Time Traveler knows that being injured in this time (our present) will simply unmake them and return them to their own time. Because of this, they have little fear of actual death. During this attack, however, the Traveler becomes more desperate and mentally unstable. He shouts at the target, saying things like, "It's your fault! All of it, everyone, your fault!" "You did this, YOU! Not me!" and "You need to die, you must die, its better this way!" The Time Traveler also addresses their target and the other investigators by name as appropriate, explaining, "Don't fight me, this has to happen, I am trying to save you!" None of this makes any sense until after the third attack. The Time Traveler keeps his face hidden, so that his identity remains unknown. However, this combat may allow investigators to get close enough to realize their attacker isn't exactly human, as they catch glimpses of their chimeric form.

The Final Attack

This last attack is the most savage, brutal, and reckless of the Time Traveler's campaign of murder. He doesn't care who dies this time so long as the target does. While he still speaks, his voice is most strained, hesitant, and labored, as forming words is now physically difficult and using language mentally taxing. The Time Traveler attacks until killed, no longer using cunning strategies and unconcerned with his personal safety. Once reduced to zero HP, he begins slowly dying and calls out to the investigators to ask for forgiveness and offer an explanation.

Confessions

The Time Traveler, thus defeated, reveals himself. They open their layers of clothing and toss off their hood or hat, to show their mutated form and familiar face. He makes the following statements as he succumbs to his wounds:

- (To their past self): "It's all your fault, my fault, our fault. We cause it, the end of all this, everything, and everyone. Why did you do it? Why didn't you stop it…. Why didn't you know what I know now?"
- "The prison doors are knocked off their hinges, no putting them back. The monsters rule now."
- "You don't even have thirty years left! It's all going to start falling apart soon."
- "Most of us dead, those left are like me, slowly slipping away, becoming them…."
- "Oh God, I can feel myself changing into this…I had to stop it. I had to try."
- "There's still one way to stop it…please promise me, you will do better than we did. Soon, there will be…."

Suddenly, the Traveler is cut off by a horrible scene (See **A Dog and Its Bone**).

A Dog and Its Bone

Before the Time Traveler can say another word, a rip appears in the nearest angle of any structure. A horrific alien creature leaps from the dark opening, landing before the Time Traveler. It has four legs, a toothy maw, and a long slavering tongue. Its body shifts between smooth curves and rough angles, while covered with a sliding, shifting blue slime. It bites at the head and face of the Time Traveler, crunching bone and silencing the death bed confession. Investigators who have encountered such creatures before, or those who make a **Cthulhu Mythos** roll, recognize this beast as a Hound of Tindalos, scourge of time and dimensional would-be travelers.

Strangely enough, the creature ignores the investigators and focuses solely on the Time Traveler. It savages his body as a hunting dog would a squirrel. Unless attacked, the creature spends the next few minutes tearing the Time Traveler apart and devouring most of their body. After that, it looks around, howls, leaps back into the temporal doorway it arrived through, and vanishes. If attacked, the Hound of Tindalos goes on a rampage, trying to kill anyone who dared to oppose it. It doesn't, however, under any circumstances, harm the targeted investigator in any way. It knows that killing him now means denying itself the pleasure of hunting the Time Traveler that it just devoured. Whether attacked or unmolested, the Hound of Tindalos doesn't linger in this time or place for more than a few moments, before departing this temporal reality.

Heroic investigators determined to not have the sacrifice be in vain might try to distract or delay the Hound while someone searches the body of the Time Traveler, perhaps finding something useful on it: an artifact, an overlooked clue from a prior adventure, or something that will help them survive a future adventure. Or, maybe, finding that thing is what triggers the End Times to begin with. Let them worry until the moment of decision.

Rewards and Repercussions

There are no **SAN** rewards for this scenario. The investigators are not out helping mankind against the forces of the Mythos—they are only trying to survive. The knowledge that one of their own may one day be responsible for triggering the start of the End Times is enough to negate any possible bonus. However, if you are applying alternate timeline theory, the warning (or something on the Traveler's person) might make some difference.

If, by contrast, the Novikov Self-Consistency Principle is in play, "what happened, happened," and the future cannot be changed. They have merely gotten a glimpse of their horrible fates, a glimpse which, in and of itself, should wear on them until they make a mistake out of stress and panic, second-guessing themselves straight to the Apocalypse.

THE HOUND OF TINDALOS

STR 80	CON 150	SIZ 85	INT 85	POW 120
DEX 50				HP 23

Damage bonus: +1D6
Build: 2
Move: 6/20 flying

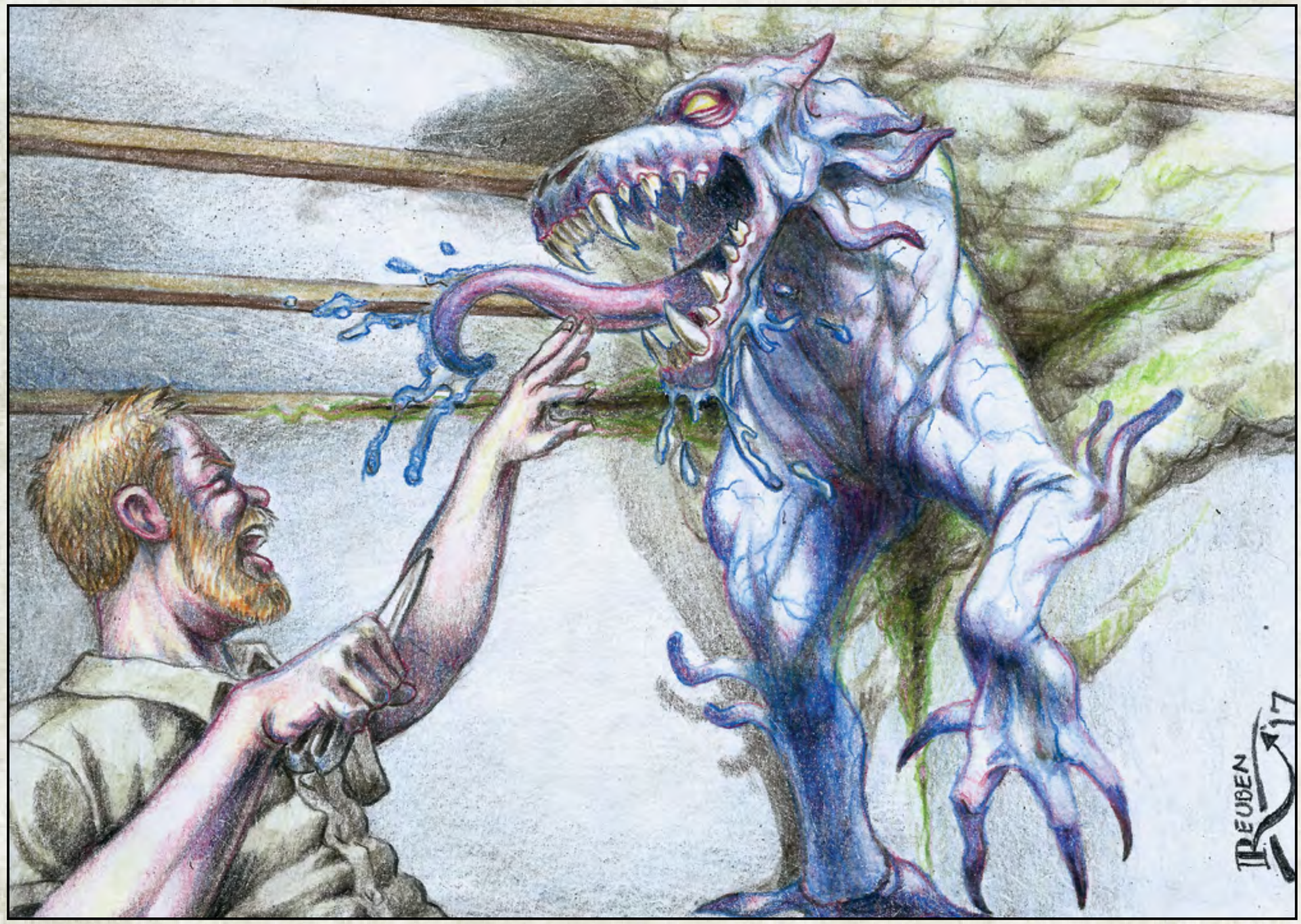
ATTACKS

Fighting (bite/paw) 90% (45/18), 1D6+db+ichor (2D6 acid damage per round, ongoing until removed)

Tongue 90% (45/18), damage 3D6 POW drain per round

Dodge 26% (13/5)

Armor: 2-point hide
Defenses: Regenerates 4 hit points per round unless at 0 hit points; mundane weapons have no effect on a Hound, though enchanted weapons and spells do full damage.
Sanity Loss: 1D3/1D20 Sanity Points to see a Hound of Tindalos



WALTER'S FINAL WISH

by matt wiseman & jennifer thrasher

ZOMBIES BRAINWASHING REVENGE OLD FOLKS HOME

Introduction

IS THIS REAL? ARE YOU REALLY SITTING HERE EVEN READING THIS? YOU'RE TAKING A LOT FOR GRANTED, TRUSTING IN WHAT YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU CAN SEE, WITH THE GESTALT OF YOUR CURRENT MOOD AND COGNITIVE DISSONANCE CAUSING YOU TO THOROUGHLY BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE IN FACT READING THIS.

In rural Ohio, there is a convalescent facility, the Whispering Willow Retirement Home. It is mostly funded by properly routed Medicare checks and occasionally, by private pensions and savings. This dubiously "luxurious" facility features 30 rooms in three separate wings with a mere 60 beds, meaning that residents have only one roommate to deal with.

Walter Carmichael is one of those rare, privately funded gems. He was a local antiques dealer, described by most who encountered him as brisk without being outright rude and avoidant without being outright racist. While keeping to himself, Walter had managed to sock away enough over the years, pedaling baubles of ages gone by, to afford to while away his few remaining days at Whispering Willow.

TRACK MARKS

If you want to link some of the stories into patterns, or provide entrees into others, it is a simple matter to put Whispering Willow in Darke County, Ohio, perhaps even near the village of Arcanum. One or two Farnsworths from "**Separation Anxiety**" might hold down day or night jobs at Whispering Willow, minding their own business but nonetheless perhaps drawing the investigators' attention through their odd appearance.

Walter specialized in Napoleonic antiquities, although with business being what it was in this small town, he'd take what he could get. In his travels abroad in his younger days, he had stumbled across a journal left behind by a crew of grave robbers. In the Napoleonic era, dentures were a hard thing to have made and were reserved for the rich who could afford them. Dentures were made of a variety of materials, but the best dentures, the dentures you'd get if you were at the highest levels of society, the most prized of all, were made of human teeth. As such, it wasn't uncommon that people would follow great military campaigns and then scour the remaining battlefields for "raw materials," if you'll forgive the crudity of the paradigm.

It was during one of these expeditions that the grave robbers who had kept this journal discovered other "raw materials sourcers." These creatures were in fact ghouls; horrible, fetid creatures simultaneously exhibiting features of dog, man and corpse…all feeding upon the deceased. As these men were already of quite low moral fiber, and as their work had already left them quite distant from society as a whole, the men were strangely comfortable with their new acquaintances. The humans were only after the inedible teeth, and the man-things were feasting only on the rotting flesh. Soon they started working together, with the ghouls removing the soft tissues of the face (the most delicate meats) so that the humans could get easier access to the teeth.

Quite the profit was made for the grave robbers…not that they seemed to care any longer. In time with their travels with "the things," they noticed that they, too, had begun to change. It was then they met their new god. Mordiggian himself had come to sup with them all, and the men were exalted beyond mere humanity, and were invited to walk with Mordiggian forever, feasting on the remains of a civilization that died in their minds decades ago.

Walter found this journal hidden in an old desk, and in it, a means to transcend his humanity and become a ghoul. A worshipper of Mordiggian can invoke an incantation in the journal before a battle, and as the battle rages, once "the dead outnumber the living," he "shall awaken from a great sleep transformed, and celebrated as a bringer of feasts," becoming a ghoul and living forever.

This notion intrigued the morally opaque Walter, as he never got over his middle aged existential crisis and still quite feared death. His fear caused him to ravenously delve into magics to become a novice sorcerer himself.

It is with this background that Walter made his plan. Use illusionary magics on a small group to have them butcher a larger, weaker group.

When his body finally betrayed him to the point that he required assisted living, Walter's mood soured to the point that he began to seriously consider putting the final parts of his plan in motion. But it wasn't until he was thoroughly disgusted by what passed for entertainment on the dimly lit, 25" tube TV dangling from the water stained ceiling tiles in his room that he firmed his resolve. He and the other denizens of Whispering Willow were, as he began to see it, forced to watch drivel for entertainment. Televisions themselves were hard enough to come by in this hell hole, much less one that worked, and there was no chance of ever locating the remote control. As he sat there, eyes glazing over like a broken character in a Kubrick film, watching in distaste the latest zombie-inspired schlock, he determined that he'd actually be doing not only himself, but his fellow residents, a favor by killing them all as fuel for the next stage of his existence.

Unnamed Journal

Sanity Loss: 1D3

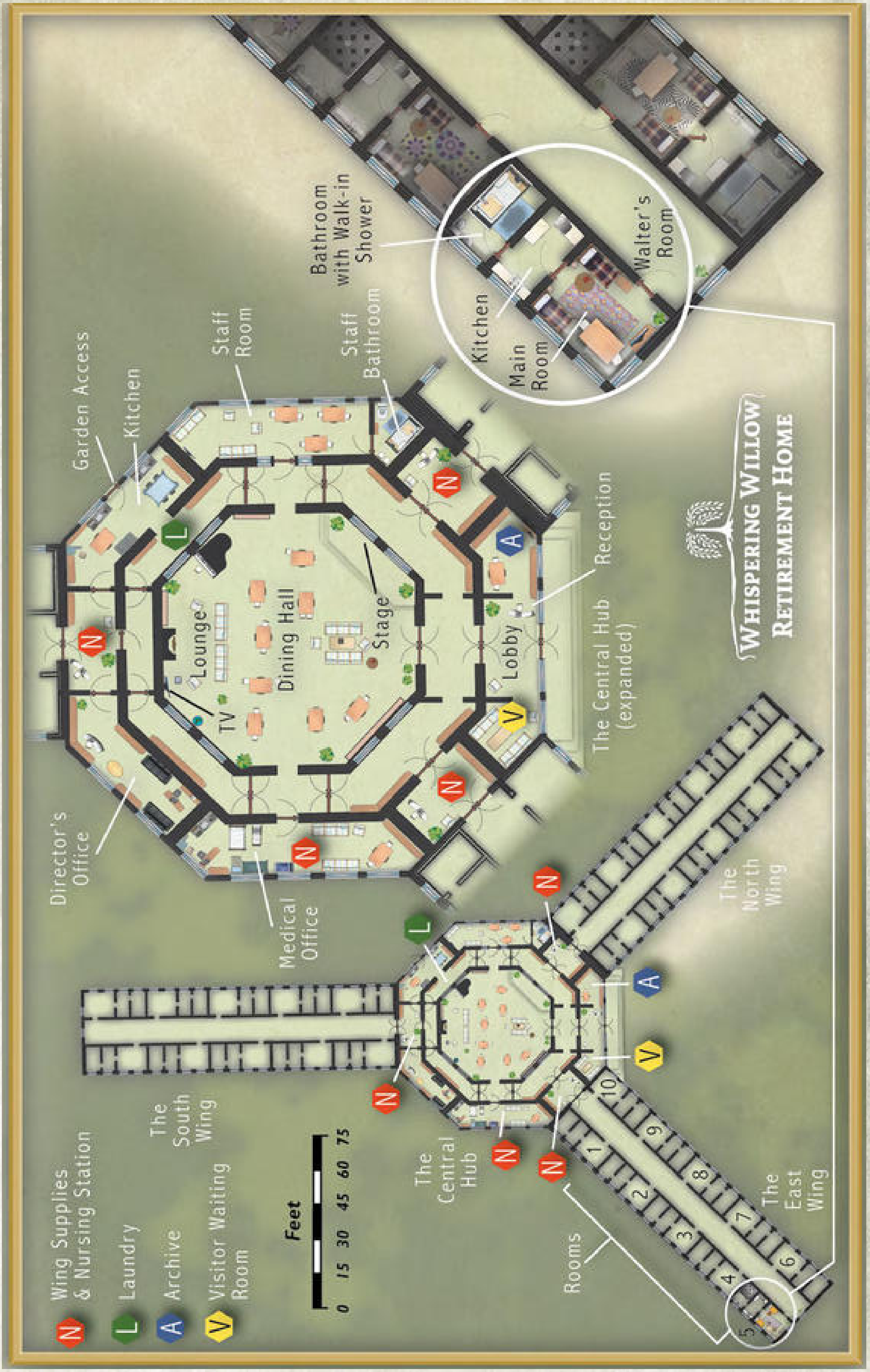
Cthulhu Mythos: +2 percentiles

Language Check: Regular French

Mythos Rating: 3

Study: 1 week

Spells Available: Ascension to Immortality (Call Mordiggian variant; see text for details).


Whispering Willow Retirement Home
N Wing Supplies & Nursing Station
L Laundry
A Archive
V Visitor Waiting Room
Feet
0 15 30 45 60 75
The South Wing
The Central Hub
The East Wing
The North Wing
Rooms
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
The Central Hub (expanded)
Director's Office
Medical Office
Garden Access
Kitchen
Staff Room
Staff Bathroom
Lounge
TV
Dining Hall
Stage
Lobby
Reception
Bathroom with Walk-in Shower
Kitchen
Main Room
Walter's Room

Involving the Investigators

The investigators are on a break in the lounge, seated in the middle of the three spokes of the nursing home. They may be visiting a relative; pursuing an investigative lead on another case and waiting for their interviewee to be available; working there themselves; or perhaps even a resident themselves. While the staff seems earnest and friendly, the facility is far from impressive: obviously underfunded and decrepit, but propped up by the fact that it is the only game in town.

Playing on the one flat screen television in the facility is a rerun (for the umpteenth time) of a popular zombie/survival drama, The Walkers. This television has not worked for months, but (finally) the damned thing seems to have been fixed. Barreling headlong into its sixth contrived season, the zombie melodrama continues to follow a plucky gang of survivors in their misadventures—perfect brain pudding to go with the questionable expiration date on the pudding that the investigators are munching on. If they are employees, they have little to do beyond sit there, collect an hourly paycheck, and watch for call lights. As luck would have it, it's a marathon tonight. All is quiet save for the sounds of the chewing of both the living and the chewing of the scenery coming from the oversaturated, off brand television.

Then all hell breaks loose.

What appears to be an actual, real life zombie slaps a rotting hand against the chicken wire reinforced glass of the slit window of the lounge, and a desiccated head peeks its way into view, to stare at the investigators with a dried, rotted out eye socket. As it breath-hisses, some unidentifiable trickle of oily, black ichor gingerly slops out of that aforementioned, baleful orifice. After **SAN** rolls are assessed (0/1D8), there comes the sound of others…hissing and lurching down the hallway.

Whispering Willow seems to be ground zero for the Zombie Apocalypse. It's around this time that the episode that finally tells us what's in the well behind the barn cuts off, interrupted abruptly by a clearly panicked reporter announcing that yes, the world has seemingly succumbed to the unquiet dead, and that corpses now roam the earth, hungering for the living. Head shots are the most efficient way of stopping them; failing that, disabling the zombies mechanically (shattering knees, removing limbs, etc.) is a good stop gap if you're not a Second Amendment American. Suddenly, the commentator is attacked by the evening gown wearing, décolletage bearing meteorologist, likewise extremely dead and rotted away but mobile. (She had been fine on the earlier weather report, if anyone pauses to consider.)

Of course, there are no such things as zombies and even if there are, the sudden appearance of a thoroughly rotted, shambling nursing home resident who was fine earlier that evening is thoroughly implausible. If the investigators think before reacting, they may recognize the "zombie" as a resident they saw wandering the halls, confused, on their way in. (Any staff members who pause to think know that they saw this resident an hour or so ago, perfectly fine.)

The initial zombie is a confused Otto Gillespie, who was hiding one of his home-made Tasers in the potted plant next to the lounge, before returning to his room. Walter's magics have made the investigators see the innocent, albeit doddering, former electrical engineer as something horrible. The only thing Walter's magics have actually re-animated was the broken television in the break room. Taking a few moments to search the room (non-fumbled **Spot Hidden** rolls) will show the last 3 months' supply of repeatedly submitted work orders for its repair, none of them marked completed. The perpetually broken status of the only good TV in the place is common knowledge and a point of contention for the staff. (If you want to put a fine point on it, looking behind a heavy credenza reveals that the TV is not even plugged in.)

But now is not the time for detective antics! Now is the time to kill zombies before they get you!

The Residents

Sample and important residents are detailed below; there are 54 residents and (at night) six staff members on duty.

Walter Carmichael is in the east wing, in room 5. He currently occupies the room by himself and will be unconscious and in a permanent coma by the time that the investigators get to him. Every death changes him a little bit, converting him more and more into a ghoul.

Walter's spell can easily be broken by simply killing him. He will also be the only resident who does not appear to be a member of the walking dead. Searching his room easily finds a variety of occult paraphernalia, as well as the journal mentioned above.

Millie Johnson was a nurse during the Second World War. An avid knitter, she is never without yarn and needles tucked into her wheelchair. She is a very sensible woman, with her white hair kept in a meticulous bun. She has a 65% **First Aid** skill, but otherwise falls in line with the rest of the residents' statistics.

Robert Eisner is in his late 60's and is a clinically diagnosed schizophrenic. His tale of woe comes to an end with him losing his pub to his gambling addiction and worsening mental state. He is an accomplished guitar player and can often be heard wailing out some ZZ Top, Led Zeppelin, or Jefferson Airplane during his more lucid moments. Otherwise he's dealing with the constant threat of his very own "Them." His wife and daughter live two towns over and are attempting to move on with their lives while the state deals with Bob.

Mabel Fredrickson is a former pinup model turned soup factory employee and still maintains her beautiful, raven black hair. Jesus may have taken her husband and her ability to walk, but he left her a substantial jewelry collection from years of international travel. She is a very crafty and capable woman.

Otto Gillespie worked on the Adlai Stevenson campaign against Eisenhower in '52 and again in '56. After those losses, he ended up quitting the political field and instead worked his way up in the local television factory until a stroke caused him to retire. He uses a wheelchair but is able to get up and walk short distances. While he may decry Eisner's obsession with "Them," as a conspiracy theorist, Gillespie "knows what's really going on," with the fluoride in the water and the FEMA Camps. As such, he's taken to doomsday prepping in the retirement home itself. He makes simple Tasers out of misplaced electronics and hides them all over the property "just in case." He has been chastised several times for these devices, a few of those times on purpose so as to have the nurses "help him" plant the devices in the confiscation drawer at the nurse's station. You can never be too careful.

Otto's Devices

Otto's "Tasers" are dangerous, to say the least. However, there are a number of them in the confiscation drawer at the nurse's station (1D6+2) and the staff knows where they are. Others may be secreted at random around the nursing home, as dramatic tension may dictate. They are hand held, high voltage devices, poorly insulated and makeshift. They require a successful **Fighting (Brawl)** roll to utilize. If successful, they do 1D6 damage to the target, with a 40% chance of doing 1D4 damage to the wielder. One unexpected side effect of a "Taser" is that the shock of the device temporarily allows the wielder to see things as they really are, for 1D8 rounds, with the resident slowly morphing back into a zombie as their speech becomes more and more unintelligible.

The effect of watching your buddy "mercy kill" a zombie with a table leg, while you use a Taser on yours, only to realize that you almost electrocuted a 78-year-old war veteran while the aforementioned buddy is bashing in the skull of a blue haired pensioner, is predictably disconcerting. **SAN** loss is 1D4/1D10 for the initial realization that you're mass murderers and not anti-zombie heroes.

Gameplay

Numerous other nameless residents wander the halls in what the television industry would call "nonspeaking" roles. They exist as fodder for the investigators. Although they shamble and clutch menacingly, they are "slow" zombies and unless they manage to overwhelm or surprise an investigator, they are ineffective combatants.

As the investigators begin the carnage to rid the world of the zombie menace, the body count will rise. The number of residents that need to be vanquished is up to the discretion of the Keeper, however, as the body count continues to rise, actual ghouls will show up. This will cause some actual problems for the players, as at that point they should have made the grisly discovery, but zapping themselves to reveal the truth only reveals new horrors. In the interim, confused and frightened residents will attack the investigators, due to their own illusions, delusions, or just because that particular person is just a huge jerk. That happens, too, at nursing homes.

This scenario may seem simplistic, but this is done on purpose. The investigators will spend most of their time in some form of combat situation, then realize the horror of what they've done, then endure more combat now knowing the horrible truth. Be mindful to occasionally throw your players a bone when they need one, as this scenario gives them precious little time to think, plan, or investigate, as they (think) will be fighting for their lives the entire time.

The scenario ends when Walter is killed, or the investigators have killed enough of the elderly to allow Mordiggian into the world, to escort the thing that once was Walter into the tunnels to live as a ghoul. What amounts to "enough killed" is up to the discretion of the Keeper.

Rewards and Repercussions

Somehow avoiding actually killing any residents gains the investigators 1D6 **SAN**. It also avoids significant problems with the law in the aftermath of this scenario. Killing Walter is a wash from a **SAN** perspective and likely results in some kind of cover-up of the partially inhuman body.

RESIDENTS, Wearing the Faces of the Not-So-Recently Deceased

STR 35 CON 60 SIZ 65 INT 55 POW 35
DEX 30 HP 12
Damage bonus: -1
Build: 1
Move: 5 (slightly slower than normal human)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 25% (12/5)

Sanity Loss: 0/1D8 (as apparent zombies)

GHOULS, Mocking Charnel Feeders

STR 80 CON 65 SIZ 65 INT 65 POW 65
DEX 65 HP 13
Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 9 (slightly faster than normal human)

ATTACKS

Attacks per round: 3

Fighting 40% (20/8), damage 1D6+db. If the ghoul's third attack (a bite) hits, it hangs on and worries for an automatic 1D4 per round. A successful **STR** vs. **STR** check is required to dislodge a worrying ghoul.

Dodge 40% (20/8)

Defenses: Firearms and projectiles do half damage, rounded down.

Skills: Climb 85%, Jump 75%, Listen 70%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 70%.

Sanity Loss: 0/1D6

WHOSE FUEL IS MEN AND STONES

by jason williams

PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER
FOR ONE PLAYER
PARANOIA
MYSTICISM

Verse 2:24 of the Quran: ...then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers.

Introduction

This modern-day scenario is designed for a Keeper and one investigator. The investigator should not have any Cthulhu Mythos knowledge but may have an interest in the occult, religion, or mysticism.

The scenario takes place in London, England between September and November, when the star Fomalhaut is visible in the night sky in the Northern Hemisphere.

A group of three Middle-Eastern immigrants are living in London. Their leader is Jaleel, a wizard. They are planning on summoning "Ifrit" to spread terror in the city. The spell that Jaleel has been studying is in fact the Call Cthugha spell. The ritual requires a human sacrifice and the investigator is their target.

The second member of the trio, Haytham, is an apprentice to the wizard. The third cell member is an individual in their mid-twenties, an ISIS recruiter who plans on making a video of the ceremony.

These three have found common cause: the recruiter wants to find a victim to be sacrificed to spread ideological terror (and is good at finding such people), and the wizards want to find a sacrificial victim.

The ISIS recruiter plans on using this video to pressure the others into becoming suicide bombers.

Involving the Investigator

The investigator is visiting London after having a family member, lover, or close friend die and leave them some money. The benefactor's will acknowledges the investigator's love of London and funded a plane ticket to London and a glitzy hotel stay for one week, in the Paddington Station area. There are Underground stations within easy walking distance of their hotel, and they will have a week to check out the museums, tourist attractions, and nightlife.

Although the investigator feels joy at being able to dream of vacationing in London and reflect on his late friend, the death weighs heavily on his mind. He has been having nightmares that wake him in the night and he sometimes feels tired and overwhelmed from his troubled sleep. This has made him vulnerable to connections with the spirit world and Mythos influences. An adept can spot this affinity to the worlds beyond, which marks the investigator as a potential sacrifice.

TRACK MARKS

This scenario could easily be linked to two different scenarios: **"Spilsbury #9485"** could take place in the middle of this one, as the solo investigator makes his way around the London Underground. It provides an opportunity for the ISIS recruiter to save the investigator, creating an element of trust between the two and overcoming any prior investigator suspicions.

"Ifrit" is posited here as an avatar of Cthugha that seeks to escape its imprisonment by preying upon the mystical curiosity of humanity and its inherent fascination with fire. It has seeped itself into the folklore and myth of a variety of Middle Eastern traditions, a spreading and consuming meme that promises rewards to those who plumb the secrets of controlling it. It presents itself as a deal-making, if mercurial entity, trying to put a comprehensible face on the incomprehensible by giving it agency. This version of Cthugha takes another shot at freedom in **"Lights Out."**

Information for the Keeper

The Keeper should feel free to use the crowds of London to instill a sense of paranoia, menace, and disorientation in the investigator.

The investigator will be spotted as a potential victim by the ISIS recruiter when he checks in to his hotel, located within a few blocks of Paddington Station.

A couple of days of game time roaming the city and surrounding areas may be useful to develop the role-playing aspect of the scenario, but keep the action moving. The Keeper should have the player make a list of the top five things that his investigator wants to do and then allow him free reign to go where he wants. The Keeper should use the matters on the list of Strange Occurrences (see nearby box) to keep the investigator on edge and make him feel isolated and uncertain. It would be useful for the Keeper to have access to the Internet while running the scenario, to be able to use online maps, views of streets, and links to tourism related materials.

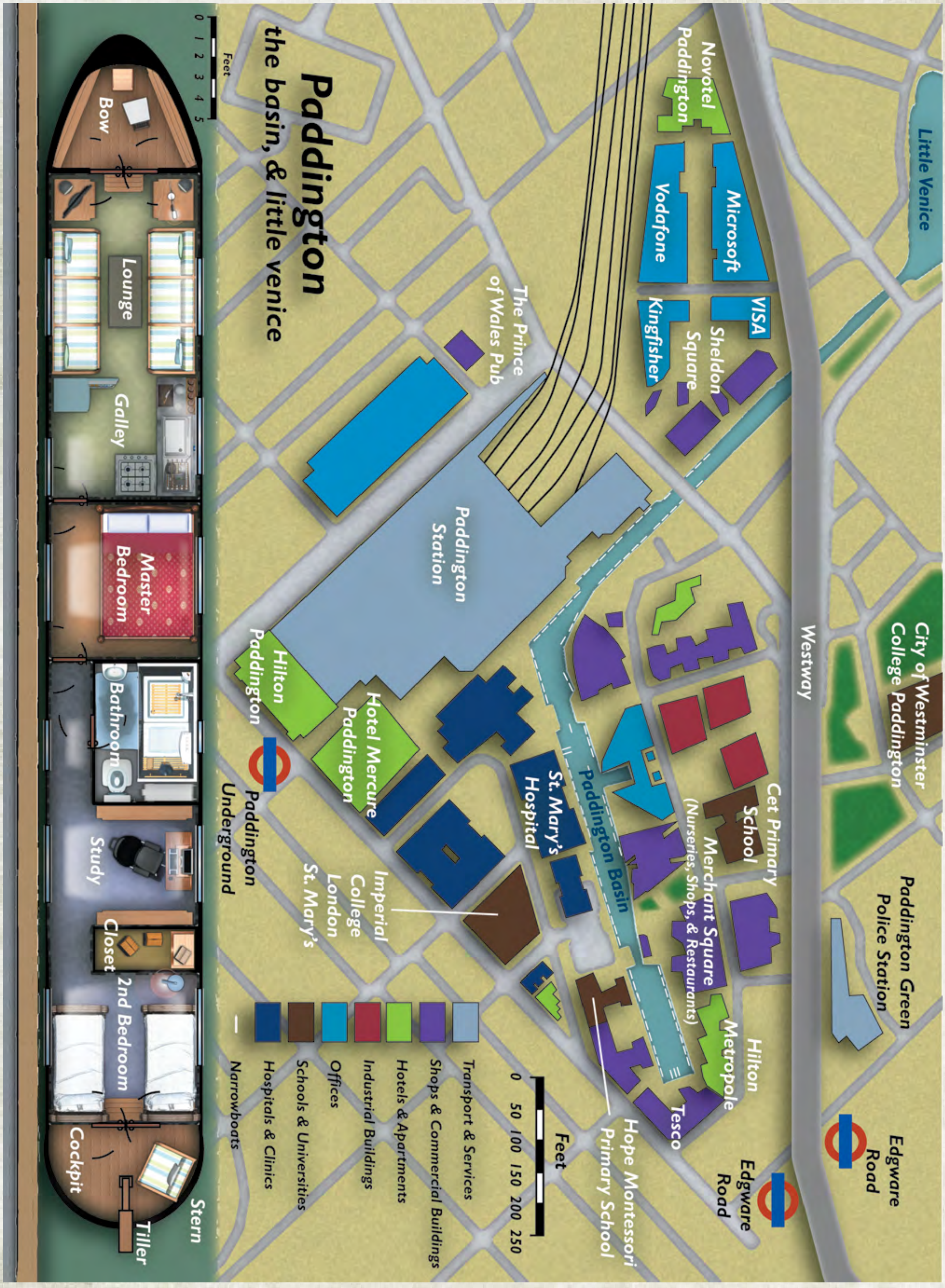
Description of Area Surrounding Paddington Station

Paddington Station is one of the major transportation hubs in the City of London, with nearly 100,000 persons passing through it each day. In addition to access to several Underground lines, it also has an express connection to Heathrow Airport and several other rail lines.

As with most of London, this area is a mixture of older and modern architecture. It is located a few blocks north of Hyde Park and to the east of the fashionable Notting Hill neighborhood.

There are nearly 100 chain and privately owned hotels within a four-block radius, plus restaurants, takeaways, pubs, cafés, grocers, tour companies, and several major businesses, including the international headquarters of major companies and Saint Mary's, which is a hospital in London with 495 beds.

The streets are busy day and night, with travelers and families pulling luggage along the sidewalks on their way to check in to a hotel or on their way to the Underground or


Paddington
the basin, & little venice
Feet
0 1 2 3 4 5
Bow
Lounge
Galley
Master Bedroom
Bathroom
Study
Closet
2nd Bedroom
Cockpit
Stern
Tiller
Little Venice
Novotel Paddington
Microsoft
Vodafone
VISA
Sheldon Square
Kingfisher
The Prince of Wales Pub
Paddington Station
Westway
City of Westminster College Paddington
Cet Primary School
Merchant Square (Nurseries, Shops, & Restaurants)
Paddington Basin
St. Mary's Hospital
Hilton Paddington
Hotel Mercure Paddington
Paddington Underground
Imperial College London St. Mary's
Paddington Green Police Station
Hilton Metropole
Tesco
Edgware Road
Edgware Road
Hope Montessori Primary School
Feet
0 50 100 150 200 250
Transport & Services
Shops & Commercial Buildings
Hotels & Apartments
Industrial Buildings
Offices
Schools & Universities
Hospitals & Clinics
Narrowboats

STRANGE OCCURRENCES—ARE THEY IMAGINED, DREAMS, OR TWISTED REALITYS?

- While walking along a crowded street, the hair stands up on the investigator's neck. Time seems to slow down and the crowd briefly parts. The investigator catches a glimpse of a person that they know has died. Dead eyes are staring at the investigator and the skin on the face is showing signs of decay. After a moment, time resumes its normal flow and the crowd obscures their line of sight. SAN loss is 1/1D3.

- As he travels on the Underground, at one point between stations, it appears that the train is passing by countless faces embedded in the tunnel walls. Each of these faces is staring directly at the investigator, mouths open in silent screams as the flesh melts and chars on their faces. After a few moments, the investigator just sees the reflections of the faces of other passengers in the window. SAN loss is 1/1D3.

- Small groups of young men, who appear to be Middle Eastern, turn to stare at the investigator as he passes by. Alternatively, they could have been talking and immediately go quiet, while one of them pulls out a cell phone and begins speaking in a foreign tongue while staring at the investigator. Some of the young men appear to be nervous or sullen, and will not make eye contact, others will stare unblinking, with a neutral expression. SAN loss is 0/1D3.

- While in a museum, the investigator sees an Egyptian mummy exhibit. The mummy suddenly appears to open its eyes and stare directly at the investigator. As soon as the investigator blinks, makes a commotion or moves away, the mummy resumes its normal state. SAN loss is 1/1D3.

- While walking through a cathedral or church yard, a successful Spot Hidden roll reveals that the name on every grave marker is that of the investigator. As soon as they attempt to get somebody else to notice the names, the tombstones return to their normal state. SAN loss is 1/1D3.

- At the site of an exhibit, in either a museum or at a historic marker about the Great Fire of London in 1666, the investigator will suddenly be overcome with a vivid vision of a great firestorm marching across the city of London towards him, flickering back and forth between 1666 London and modern day London. The vision is complete with horrible shrieks of agony and sights of people nearby bursting into flames. After a few moments, the vision passes and everything returns to normal. SAN loss is 1D3/1D6. This one should seriously unnerve the investigator and cause them to seek out help.

- Any Internet search while in London returns at least one result about the Great Fire of London, no matter how unrelated the search is. SAN loss is 0/1 after the pattern is noticed.

train station. In the mornings, and late afternoons, commuters on their way to or from work fill the stations and surrounding streets. Taxis line up waiting for fares and the coffee shops and restaurants have long queues.

East of Paddington Station is Paddington Basin, which is part of the British canal system. It runs northwest from there for a few blocks to an area called Little Venice Lagoon, which is the junction of the Regent's Canal and the Grand Union Canal. There are over 10,000 people living on boats in London, and many of them are within this canal system on what are called Narrow Boats, short and narrow enough to fit into the smallest canal locks.

Setting Up the Investigator

The ISIS recruiter (who will be an attractive member of whichever gender the investigator might be romantically interested in) arranges to bump into the investigator on their arrival at the hotel. They have been staying at the hotel for a few days, looking for just such an opportunity: a lonely looking, out of town tourist, by himself, who won't be immediately missed.

The ISIS recruiter has a fake identity as a graduate student in archaeology and from a well-off family from a relatively non-suspicious Middle Eastern country (e.g., Lebanon), complete with a matching fake passport. He (or she) comes across as well-educated and reasonably knowledgeable about such matters. A Hard **Anthropology** roll (made only after becoming suspicious and spending a good bit of time with the person) might convince the investigator that the ISIS recruiter is actually Iraqi from inconsistencies in accent. Likewise, a Hard **Archaeology** roll might (after lengthy and appropriate interaction) detect that the recruiter's knowledge of Archaeology has suspicious holes, gaps, and errors in it.

Should the investigator be able to surreptitiously snoop through the ISIS recruiter's smartphone or hack his laptop computer (Hard **Computer Use** roll), which are kept on their person and/or locked in their hotel room, a number of suspicious emails and texts to "Jaleel" and "Haytham" might be found, basically reporting the ISIS recruiter's every move and arguing back and forth about whether they should move "tonight" or if "things need more time."

If the investigator does not jump at the chance for a romantic week of museums, restaurants, and sex, that's fine. The ISIS recruiter backs off and is just friendly, and comes to the investigator's aid after the shock of the Great Fire vision: they just happened to be nearby.

When the time comes to move to the end of the scenario, the Keeper should modify the approach to capture the investigator, based on how they have interacted with the ISIS recruiter.

- If it has become a friendly connection, the recruiter could walk the investigator to the area behind St. Mary's Hospital and invite them to go aboard a narrow boat that is moored there for dinner (romantic or otherwise). The boat belongs to a relative, they say. If a romance has been on a slow burn, this might be pitched as a romantic interlude.
- If the investigator is very trusting, the ISIS recruiter eventually, when the time is right, spikes the investigator's drink to subdue him and, under the guise of taking him to the hospital to see what's wrong, hustles him into a car where the wizards are waiting.
- If there has been no real connection made, the recruiter's options are a bit more limited and it will involve kidnapping the investigator. Possibilities include using **Stealth** (or a stolen or borrowed key) to enter their room with an accomplice to overpower them, or paying locals to pull up alongside the investigator while he is walking and pull him into a van. There are risks involved in both options, in that other bystanders may become witnesses and call the police.

The Summoning

The cultists' goal is to capture the investigator and take him on board a narrow boat that is docked in the Paddington Basin behind St. Mary's Hospital. The ritual requires spilling the blood of the investigator at night, while Fomalhaut is above the horizon. The Keeper should decide how much damage the bloodletting will do, and permit the investigator to react (perhaps through a sedated haze, applying a penalty die to any actions). Or perhaps a cautious investigator who sensed something afoot feigned sedation and can now get the drop on the cultists (with or without the aid of surreptitiously summoned police). It is likewise possible that a cautious investigator simply runs for it, although this results in the destruction of London when another victim is set up.

If and when the ritual gets going, things clearly supernatural are afoot, and the ISIS recruiter begins to argue with the wizards in Arabic. The temperature of the room gets extremely hot; there are Mythos influenced and arcane runes scrawled in silver on the deck of the boat; and an ancient, black, curved sacrificial dagger is soon produced. (A Hard **Occult** roll recognizes the runes as related to fire; a **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recognizes the elements of the *Call Cthugha* spell.) If the investigator speaks any Arabic, the gist of the argument is that videotaping the arrival of the mighty Ifrit is blasphemy and the wizards will not allow it. The recruiter complains that videotaping is the whole point, and that the "fire is incidental"; the wizards laugh at that last comment as though it were absurd. The investigator might be allowed a Hard **Idea** roll to get the overall idea that the abductors are having a falling out, and that it seems to center on the idea of videotaping the proceedings as the camera is brandished, argued about, and finally thrown over the side.

If the investigator has formed a bond with the ISIS recruiter, that individual, out of fear of the outcome of the summoning, slips the investigator an iron nail and warns the investigator to puncture his skin if it looks like something is appearing. Piercing a sacrificial victim with a nail is a method of banishing a summoned Ifrit. Alternatively, it should not be difficult to persuade the ISIS recruiter that allowing someone to be sacrificed to some sort of evil entity would be blasphemous and should not be assisted.

If the ritual is interrupted via nail puncture, then instead of a full-on Cthugha, an avatar called the Living Flame of Deepest Black will appear for 3D6 rounds (details follow).

Rewards and Repercussions

If the investigator cleverly turns the tables on the cultists and prevents any summoning, award 1D6 **SAN**. If Cthugha is summoned, the investigator (and most of London) are incinerated.

JALEEL, Mystic/Wizard and Cult Leader

STR 45	CON 45	SIZ 70	INT 65	POW 75
DEX 50	APP 35	EDU 75	SAN 0	HP 11

Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 3 (semi-invalid who walks with difficulty)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 35% (17/7), damage 1D3 (or ancient sacrificial dagger 1D4+2+db)

Skills: Craft (jewelry making) 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 20%, Language (Arabic) 75%, Language (English) 45%, Occult 40%, Persuade 65%.

Nationality: Saudi Arabian

Age: 72

Spells: Summon Ifrit (Call Cthugha), Evil Eye, Melt Flesh

Notes: The wizard is a gaunt and kindly seeming older man, who runs a small stall at Camden Market selling mystical trinkets, mainly cheap reproductions made in China. He has a few ancient scrolls from the Middle East that he has been studying and has learned a Summon Ifrit spell which requires the blood of a murder victim. He has decided to unleash an Ifrit on London to spread destruction, death, and terror. He doesn't quite grasp that this means London as a whole will be destroyed; he is visualizing something like a spectacular fireworks display that might take out a block or two. His hope is that it will be a huge event, after which his magic abilities will gain him power and fame within the ISIS community. He knows that ISIS has executed some self-proclaimed wizards in Syria and Iraq, but they were mere purveyors of trinkets, potions, and bits of paper representing protective charms. He thinks that he will gain respect from being able to wield actual magic. He is, of course, totally insane. Jaleel owns and lives on a narrow boat named Raghad, meaning "comfortable."

HAYTHAM, Apprentice Cultist

STR 55 CON 45 SIZ 65 INT 75 POW 70
DEX 35 APP 60 EDU 75 SAN 35 HP 11
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 7

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 40% (20/8), damage 1D3 (or meat cleaver 1D8+db)

Skills: Computer Use 55%, Electronics 60%, Language (Arabic) 75%; Language (English) 60%, Occult 40%, Stealth 50%.
Nationality: Iraqi
Age: 22
Spells: none.
Notes: A handsome if somewhat chunky young man. He is not talkative, and looks toward his mentor Jaleel for guidance and direction.

NAZIM (Male) or KHAWLAH (Female) Abdelaziz, ISIS Recruiter

Use the statistics in parentheses if using Khawlah
STR 65 (55) CON 55 SIZ 60 (50) INT 65 POW 75
DEX 50 APP 70 EDU 70 SAN 75 HP 11 (10)
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 60% (30/12), damage 1D3
Skills: Skills: Accounting 40%, Archaeology 10%, Charm 60%, Computer Use 55%, Disguise 25%, Fast Talk 50%, Language (Arabic) 70%, Language (English) 60%, Occult 30%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 55%.
Nationality: Iraqi (pretending to be from elsewhere)
Age: 27
Spells: none.
Notes: The Keeper should modify the NPC (the ISIS recruiter) that the investigator interacts with when they check in to the hotel based on the nature of the investigator. If they may be susceptible to a romantic approach, then the sex/sexuality of the NPC should be adjusted accordingly. If the investigator requires a local guide, or has a poor grasp of the English language, then the NPC may offer their services as a guide during their off hours. Be as flexible as required and have the NPC interact with the investigator in a friendly and helpful manner. This NPC is smooth and charismatic, seemingly able to understand the investigator better than they understand their self.

LIVING FLAME OF DEEPEST BLACK, Avatar of Cthugha

This creature has been converted from its listing in Chaosium's *Malleus Monstrorum* (pp. 136-137).
STR 225 CON 130 SIZ 225 INT 35 POW 110
DEX 45 HP 35
Damage bonus: +5D6
Build: 6
Move: 15
Magic Points: 22

ATTACKS

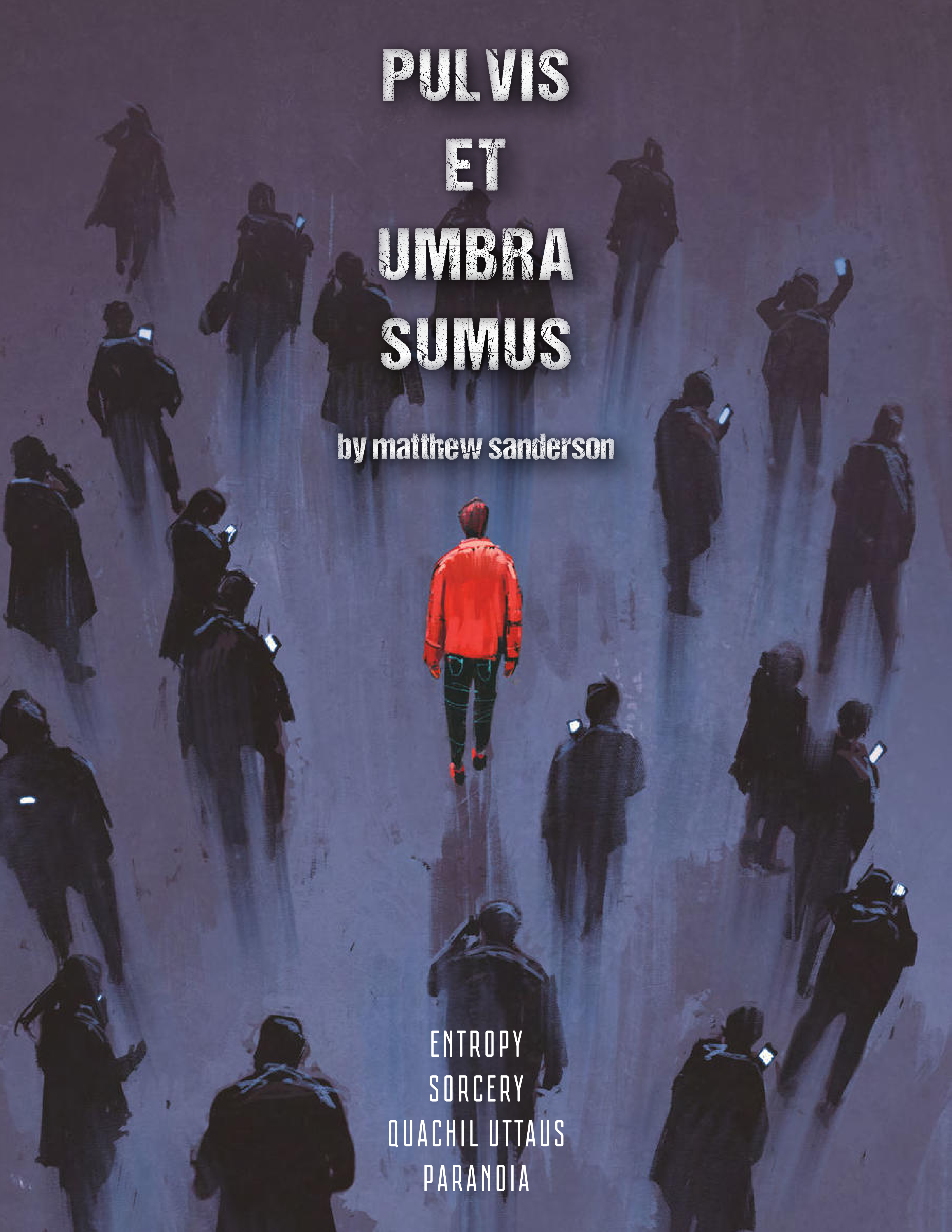
It attacks each round either with two horns, or with a single ram attack. Also, due to its intense, inner fire, everyone within a 15-foot radius of the creature sustains 1 hit point of fire/heat damage each round. It generates enough heat to melt its way through rock and set flammable objects alight.

Horn (x2) 50% (25/10), damage 1D8+2+db+flammable objects set on fire

Ram 60% (30/12), damage 1D10+db+flammable objects set on fire

Automatic Scorch/Inner Fire, automatic to 15-foot radius, damage 1 hit point per round

Armor: 5 points of muscle
Spells: Any as desired by the Keeper
Sanity Loss: 1/1D8 Sanity points to see The Living Flame of Deepest Black



PULVIS ET UMBRA SUMUS

by matthew sanderson

ENTROPY
SORCERY
QUACHIL UTTAUS
PARANOIA

Introduction

OPHELIA ATWOOD WAS ONCE TERRIFIED OF DEATH. CENTURIES AGO, SHE FOUND THE SECRET TO IMMORTALITY IN THE TESTAMENT OF CARNAMAGOS. SINCE THEN, SHE HAS LIVED IN SECLUSION OUTSIDE OF EAGLE LAKE, MAINE, TO AVOID ANYONE NOTICING SHE NO LONGER AGED BEYOND HER LATE-30S. TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD, A WEALTHY AND RECLUSIVE FAMILY LIVED IN HER ISOLATED HOUSE. OVER THE YEARS, OPHELIA ADOPTED VARIOUS NAMES, ALWAYS CLAIMING TO BE LOOKING AFTER HER AGING MOTHER (OF THE PREVIOUS NAME SHE USED). MIND-CONTROLLING SPELLS SHE LEARNED FROM THE TOME HELPED TO SILENCE QUESTIONS WHEN THEY AROSE.

While Ophelia kept people distant, she embraced new technology and used it to watch how humanity was poisoning the planet, killing the wildlife and bringing about its own destruction. Over the last hundred years, Ophelia's despair and madness grew. Recently, she hit a breaking point, believing the human race no longer deserved to exist.

Ophelia has devised a plan to solve this problem. Ophelia contacted several private detective agencies across the country. Stating that she was a wealthy recluse with no living relatives, she wanted to bequeath her fortune to those who needed it. The agencies provided her with a list of such people—the investigators. She then approached a local law firm (Carter & Carter), claiming that her "mother" (Ophelia Senior) had died and left a will for them to handle. Her magic convinced the lawyers to contact the investigators, inviting them to Ophelia's house for the reading of the will, as per her "mother's" wishes.

Completing her plan, Ophelia summoned Quachil Uttaus, the Treader of the Dust, and bound the god to *The Testament of Carnamagos* itself. This binding cost Ophelia her life, but she gave it willingly. Anyone coming within a mile of the book would now become a conduit for the god's power. Through them, Quachil Uttaus would turn the world to dust.

Lured into this trap, the investigators should quickly come to realize something has happened to them. Breaking the binding will free the investigators, but will incur the god's wrath.

Involving the Investigators

All of the investigators should have low **Credit Ratings** and/or be in debt, making the inheritance impossible to ignore. Ideally, they should live in the larger cities of the country (e.g., New York, Los Angeles, Chicago). They need not know each other. This commonality between them can be revealed with **Idea** rolls later.

Each investigator receives a letter from the Carter & Carter Law Firm inviting them to the reading of the will of Ophelia Atwood at 17:00 on December 21. No mention is made of anyone else being invited. Plane tickets are provided to the Northern Maine Regional Airport in Presque Isle, Maine. Prepaid rental cars are waiting at the airport for them to make their way to the house (35 miles northwest of Presque Isle). Their return flight leaves at 20:30.

Initial Research

Researching the law firm confirms that they are legitimate. Louise Wright, the firm's secretary, is easily contactable. She is only permitted to confirm limited details (that Ophelia Atwood has died, that her will is to be read on December 21, etc.), but enough to validate the correspondence.

The investigators have never heard of any Ophelia Atwood and may not even know anyone in Northern Maine. If this puts them on their guard, that is fine and appropriate. Internet searches may determine (through Zillow or public records databases) that two Ophelia Atwoods (one reportedly aged 39 and one reportedly aged 78) are listed as living in the area, with addresses given as P.O. Boxes in Eagle Lake, Maine. Neither has a driver's license, neither is registered to vote and neither has any sort of social media presence.

From the Airport

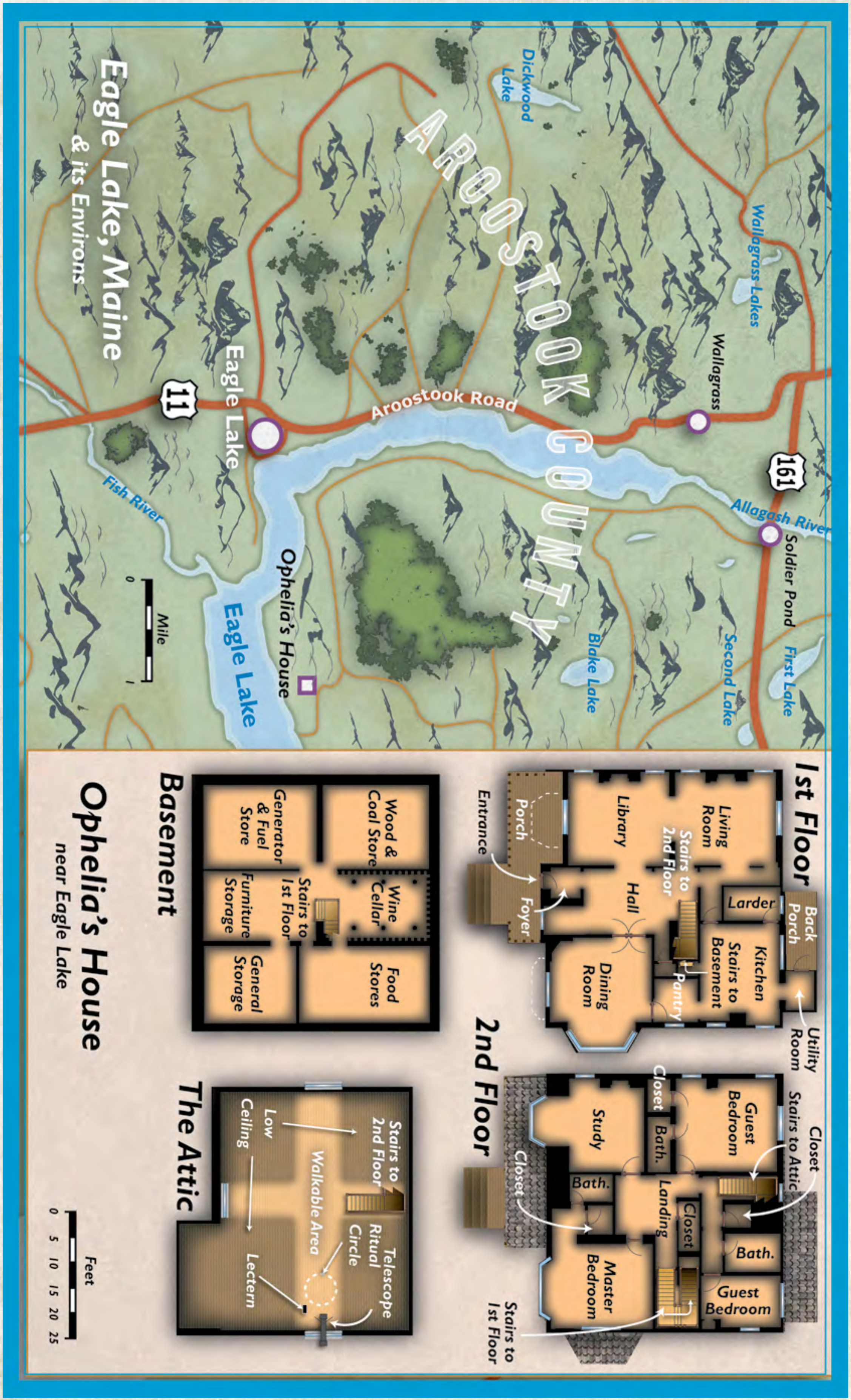
The investigators land at Northern Maine Regional Airport at 15:00 on a connecting flight from Logan International Airport in Boston. It is cold, with sleet and snow falling. Sunset is at 15:47, sunrise is at 07:14. The car rental desk where they collect their cars from is just beyond baggage claim. The Keeper can decide if the investigators meet here for the first time or at Ophelia's house.

The house is on the northern shore of Eagle Lake. The town of Eagle Lake is on the lake's southwest shore. The quickest route to the house is north along State Route 161, then south via back-roads. The landscape along State Route 161 is mostly fields with occasional woodland. Traffic flows cautiously and the weather gets steadily worse. Off State Route 161, the landscape is all woodland. Traffic lessens and the isolation is palpable as the investigators approach the house. The whole journey takes one hour and thirty minutes.

Arrival at the House

The next nearest house is two miles away. There are a few lights on inside. By this point, Ophelia is dead, having performed her ritual two hours ago.

A car parked off of the road near the house belongs to Joseph Chalmers, one of the private detectives Ophelia hired. One of his friends works at another agency that Ophelia hired and told Joseph of Ophelia's wider search. Sensing something amiss, he started watching Ophelia's house two days ago and got Louise Wright to inform him of the meeting on December 21. Two hours ago, while hiding among the trees, he witnessed Quachil Uttaus descend from the stars along a beam of light (losing 20 **Sanity** points). Terrified, he remains hidden, watching the investigators through binoculars.


Eagle Lake, Maine
& its Environs
AROOSTOOK COUNTY
Dickwood Lake
Wallagrass Lakes
Wallagrass
Aroostook Road
11
Eagle Lake
161
Allagash River
Soldier Pond
Fish River
Ophelia's House
Eagle Lake
Blake Lake
Second Lake
First Lake
0
Mile
1
Ophelia's House
near Eagle Lake
1st Floor
Living Room
Library
Stairs to 2nd Floor
Hall
Larder
Back Porch
Kitchen
Stairs to Basement
Porch
Entrance
Foyer
Dining Room
Pantry
Utility Room
2nd Floor
Guest Bedroom
Closet
Stairs to Attic
Study
Bath.
Closet
Bath.
Landing
Closet
Bath.
Master Bedroom
Guest Bedroom
Stairs to 1st Floor
Basement
Wood & Coal Store
Wine Cellar
Food Stores
Generator & Fuel Store
Stairs to 1st Floor
Furniture Storage
General Storage
The Attic
Stairs to 2nd Floor
Low Ceiling
Walkable Area
Telescope
Ritual Circle
Lectern
0
5
10
15
20
25
Feet

Testament of Carnamagos

Sanity Loss: 1D10

Cthulhu Mythos: +4/+9 percentiles

Language Check: Regular Greek

Mythos Rating: 35

Study: 42 weeks

Spells Available: Call Quachil Uttaus, plus any others relating to mind-control and immortality that the Keeper desires.

The book is the only thing immune to the decay of the god bound within it. Around the incantation to Call Quachil Uttaus, Ophelia wrote a justification for her actions (in English): "I will save the world from the corruption of humanity."

A more expensive car is parked just outside the house. Inside is Dennis Carter of the Carter and Carter Law Firm. His wife and law firm partner, Laura, is at home, suffering from a cold. Dennis arrived only a few minutes ago. He is phoning Laura to let her know he arrived safely when the investigators arrive.

Approaching the house, the porch light and others inside the house abruptly go out as the decay spreads and intensifies. The front door is unlocked.

Joseph, Dennis, and all the investigators are now conduits for Quachil Uttaus' power, due to coming within a mile of the book.

Ophelia's House

The house is characterized by a mixture of old and new. Antique furniture adorns every room, alongside televisions, computers, tablets, etc. but all of these no longer function due to the decay. A thin layer of dust is everywhere. Dust is also suspended throughout the air, swirling where the investigators walk.

First Floor

The library contains mundane reference material (mostly on history and geography). Only a handful of utensils look used in the kitchen. The dining room table only has wear in one spot, implying that one person has used the same spot consistently.

Basement

All stores are well-stocked, but all of the food and drink is decaying. More valuable antique furniture is in storage.

Second Floor

The guest bedrooms are unused. The master bedroom is tidy. Piled on the study's desk are magazines and newspapers with headlines of disasters, atrocities, and environmental catastrophes from the last ten years. All crumble to dust when touched. Successful **Spot Hidden** rolls reveal that the closet between the guest bedrooms appears smaller than it should be given the layout of the rooms. A door is concealed in the back of the closet, leading to the attic stairs.

Attic

The attic is empty, apart from the ritual circle, telescope and lectern. The circle is drawn in chalk, formed by interlocking geometric patterns. A large pile of dust in the circle used to be Ophelia. The telescope points out of the open, east-facing window, towards the horizon. *The Testament of Carnamagos* sits upon the lectern, open at the page containing the three-word incantation "Exklopios Quachil Uttaus" to summon Quachil Uttaus.

Dennis's Actions

When it becomes clear that Ophelia is missing, Dennis requests that everyone leave the house. He does not feel comfortable being inside without the owner present. This can prevent early discovery of the attic.

Dennis is confused. He believed that Ophelia was going to hand over the will that night, and he would have taken care of all legal matters after the reading. Challenging him about this unorthodox setup will break the effect of the mind-control spell cast upon him, leaving him more confused. He will want to return to his office in Eagle Lake to check his paperwork and try to contact Ophelia.

Departure

As the investigators decide to leave, they receive text messages from the airline stating that their flight back to Boston has been cancelled. No flights are leaving the airport, due to the bad weather, until tomorrow morning. They are offered a discount on a future flight and reimbursement of up to $150 for overnight accommodation expenses.

Dennis (if he hears of this) recommends the Lakeside Hotel in Eagle Lake to the investigators. He says that he will call them in the morning with any news. Alternatively, the investigators can drive back to Presque Isle, through heavy sleet and snow, and find rooms at the Aroostook Hotel on Main Street, in the center of town, if they insist on being close to the airport.

Hard **Spot Hidden** rolls allow investigators to catch a partial glimpse of a small figure (Quachil Uttaus) in their rearview mirror, sitting in the empty back seat (**SAN** loss 1/1D3) as they drive away from the house. Further investigation reveals nothing more, however.

Joseph's Actions

Joseph watches from the trees while the investigators are present. The Keeper may hint at his presence with **Spot Hidden** rolls revealing his shadow or a glint of light off his binoculars, but should refrain from allowing the investigators to make contact with him at this stage. Once the investigators leave, he will follow them at distance. Succeeding a **Spot Hidden** roll opposed by Joseph's Drive Auto skill allow investigators to realize they are being followed (see **Confronting Joseph**).

Hotels and Mirrors

As the investigators check into their chosen hotel(s), the receptionist looks a little ill (as her characteristics reduce), but reassures concerned investigators that she is fine. The rooms are spacious and comfortable. Investigators freshening up can make a **Spot Hidden** roll as they look in the large bathroom mirror. Success reveals that something is hiding just behind their reflection, but not physically behind them. A **DEX** roll tricks Quachil Uttaus into revealing itself in the reflection for one round, before hiding again (**SAN** loss is 1D6/1D20). Should more than one investigator appear in a single mirror, multiple copies of Quachil Uttaus could potentially be seen.

If the investigators try to make contact with the god, the Keeper is free to determine how communicative it chooses to be. Unless an investigator has previously read *The Testament of Carnamagos*, **Cthulhu Mythos** rolls will not identify the god, as it is only described in that one tome.

CONDUITS OF QUACHIL UTTAUS

Everything within a mile of a conduit (including the investigators, Dennis, and Joseph) starts to age at an accelerated rate. Every living creature that is not a conduit loses 1 **STR**, 1 **CON**, 1 **DEX**, and 1 **APP** per minute that they remain within the area of effect. Those affected feel increasingly nauseous. Observers automatically notice physical changes to those affected after 5 points of any characteristic has been lost. Once any characteristic is reduced to 0 in this fashion, the victim dies, collapsing into dust. Inanimate objects in the area of effect are eroded, at any rate the Keeper desires.

Conduits also receive some of the defense Quachil Uttaus has—they cannot be harmed by direct physical attacks and weapons used against them turn to dust. Only conduits can realistically harm other conduits, and only via indirect methods (e.g., asphyxiation or drowning, *Call of Cthulhu Keeper Rulebook* p. 124) as all normal impact damage is ignored.

Encounters

After the investigators check in, other hotel guests and staff become increasingly ill. Forty minutes after check in, dust appears in the air and the first deaths occur. The investigators will have different encounters depending upon their location in the hotel. Examples might include:

- The hotel bartender coughs while pouring a drink. His hand crumbles to dust. He screams as he rapidly decays. Others in the bar quickly follow.
- Swimming in the hotel pool, a fellow guest noticeably ages with each passing length. They cry out as a growing grey stain radiates from them. They submerge and never resurface.
- A guest pounds on the investigator's door and his hand pushes through the crumbling wood. He reaches for the investigator, crying for help as he turns to dust.

SAN loss for such inexplicable encounters is 1D3/1D10. All electrical devices in the vicinity soon fail, except the investigator's cell phones, and dust quickly accumulates. Outside, there are sounds of cars crashing as drivers die at the wheel. Distant screams are heard above the wind, but are cut short. Lights go out all over the town. Soon, the investigators are the only living people in sight.

Calling for Help

If the investigators call for help, all local emergency services are dead. Calling further afield (state police, CDC, etc.) takes time for them to arrive. Less than an hour following their arrival, they too turn to dust.

The Keeper is encouraged to be creative with responses from the authorities. All such attempts to help inevitably fail. Roadblocks set up around the town too close are eventually manned only by dust. Mobile research facilities set up are soon lifeless after hopeless tests fail.

Confronting Joseph

This scene occurs either when the investigators confront him about following them or as they leave their hotel to explore the destruction. Wild-eyed, Joseph states that they are working for "it," pointing behind them. Rambling, he shares what led him to the house and what he saw. Proclaiming that they are responsible and that they must be stopped, he pulls his gun and shoots. Once this has no effect, he tries to strangle the nearest investigator (which could work). He will not stop until restrained or killed.

Finding Dennis

Dennis is found in his apartment above the law firm office. Laura has died because of her proximity to him. This has driven him to attempt suicide, but his attempts fail because he tries to inflict direct physical damage on himself. Hard **Persuade** or **Psychoanalysis** rolls calm him down. He tells the investigators that he now remembers the truth (Ophelia controlling him to write to the investigators, etc.). He declares that Ophelia must have the answers. They should return to her house to track her down.

Returning to the House

The nearby trees are now turning to dust, along with parts of the house, including the contents of the upstairs closet and the hidden door. This allows the investigators access to the attic if they missed it before, and to find Ophelia's suicide note written in the *Testament.*

The Testament of Carnamagos cannot be destroyed until Quachil Uttaus has been summoned out of it. If necessary, Dennis knows enough Greek to convey the description of Quachil Uttaus near the incantation and how to call the god. The text also explains what has happened to them (becoming conduits) and that summoning the god will break its connection to them. Alternatively, the players could go on a nihilistic hunt for someone who can read Greek in the town or elsewhere, dooming them but perhaps saving the rest of the world. They might even use their smartphones to find someone a distance away.

Calling Quachil Uttaus

Saying "Exklopios Quachil Uttaus" aloud calls Quachil Uttaus (costing the speaker 1D10 **Sanity** points and 1D10 magic points). A pillar of grayish-blue light descends upon the investigators through the collapsing roof or wherever they may have moved the book. The floor turns to dust and the investigators fall into a dark limbo of illimitable, unsphered time and space below.

As they float here, Quachil Uttaus descends on the pillar of light, towards them (**SAN** loss is 1D6/1D20). It then floats towards a randomly chosen investigator to touch them (**Fighting (Brawl)**, opposed by the investigator's **DEX**). Anyone touched by Quachil Uttaus turns into a cloud of dust. If present, Dennis and Joseph are the first victims. Quachil Uttaus will not stop until all present are destroyed.

DEX rolls allow investigators to float in any direction. **STR** rolls can pull others with them. If an investigator enters the pillar of light, a Hard **POW** roll and 1D10 magic points allows them to ascend back to the dusty ruins of the house or wherever the book is. Quachil Uttaus does not follow. Nearby in the dust is *The Testament of Carnamagos*. The investigators can then destroy it, ending the threat.

Rewards and Repercussions

For breaking Quachil Uttaus' Binding, invstigators receive 1D10 **SAN.** For saving Dennis, award each investigator 1D8 **SAN.** If they destroy *The Testament of Carnamagos,* each investigator earns 1D6 **SAN.** Killing Joseph, or losing a fellow investigator, costs each investigator 1D6 **SAN.**

JOSEPH CHALMERS, Private Detective

STR 50	CON 60	SIZ 55	INT 70	POW 60
DEX 65	APP 50	EDU 75	SAN 40	HP 11

Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10)

Firearms (Handgun) 50% (25/10). Permitted to carry a concealed .32 automatic (damage normally 1D8)

Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills: Credit Rating 35%, Dodge 40%, Drive Auto 50%, Fast Talk 50%, Language (English) 75%, Law 60%, Library Use 40%, Listen 45%, Locksmith 40%, Persuade 50%, Psychology 60%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 45%.
Nationality: American
Age: 39
Education: B.A., Criminal Justice, University of Maine
Spells: none.
Indefinite Insanity: Believes everyone is actively helping Quachil Uttaus to end the world
Notes: Dressed in a cheap suit and winter coat, he has bags under his eyes and smells of cigarettes and coffee. The sight of the god was too much for him. Desperately trying to rationalize events, he believes that the investigators are actively helping Quachil Uttaus and that he must stop them.

DENNIS CARTER, Lawyer

STR 45	CON 50	SIZ 50	INT 80	POW 70
DEX 55	APP 55	EDU 90	SAN 70	HP 10

Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 7

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 25% (12/5)

Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills: Credit Rating 70%, Dodge 35%, Language (English) 90%, Language (Greek) 20%, Language (Latin) 30%, Law 75%, Library Use 55%, Listen 40%, Persuade 65%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 40%.
Nationality: American
Age: 47
Education: J.D., University of Maine
Spells: none.
Notes: Dressed in an expensive suit, with a hint of fine aftershave. He wears round glasses and his hairline is receding. He is most comfortable when he knows all of the answers. He is very much a skeptic.

QUACHIL UTTAUS, Treader of the Dust

STR 60	CON 100	SIZ 30	INT 95	POW 175
DEX 15				HP 13

Damage bonus: N/A
Build: 0
Move: Special (instant teleportation, or floats at any speed)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 100% (50/20), damage is instantaneous death (aging to dust)

Armor: None
Defenses: Immune to all physical and magical attacks. Weapons used to attack Quachil Uttaus age instantly to dust.
Spells: Any desired by the Keeper (especially any related to life, death, time and aging).
Sanity Loss: 1D6/1D20

THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE AWTO

by jo kreil

SENTIENT OBJECT
TECHNOLOGICAL HORROR
MURDER
TICK-TOCK MAN

"…the sacrifices required by Awto took place at all hours on every street and highway…Picture, if you can, the ever-mounting horror of it all. The nation-wide madness of immolation. The carnivals of bloody holidays. The highways lined from coast to coast with crushed and dismembered sacrifices!"

—*The Great God Awto*, by Clark Ashton Smith

Introduction

Automobiles have caused the deaths of millions of individuals and polluted our atmosphere, killing even more slowly with their smog. Slowly, they are helping to prepare the world for the time when the stars come right. It is no wonder then that Nyarlathotep has decided to use the automobile as yet another tool of chaos.

Dr. Sarkeen Harmon has been working on a new experimental engine for use in automobiles, a steam engine which would not only burn cleaner but only need simple water as fuel. Dr. Harmon's research stalled recently, faced with technological challenges in the engine design. He was at his wit's end, until he was approached by a lawyer by the name of Alexander Ashton, with an offer of both a grant and research assistance. He was happy for the financial aid, though unnerved by the waxy-faced individuals that he was given as research assistants. Thoughts and ideas almost seemed to flow onto paper, as he used the research materials and assistance provided by Ashton. What the good doctor did not know was that his inspiration was flowing from Nyarlathotep, intent on building a body for its avatar, the Tick-Tock Man, who brings chaos and destruction through unbridled technology.

The engine is now complete and Harmon has started building a massive chassis. Harmon has grown more uneasy as the experimental automobile is finished, as there is something sinister about it. His apprehension grew when he stopped at the workshop late one night, to find the waxy-faced helpers provided by Ashton still working, exactly as they had been when he had left them earlier that evening. Surveilling them has led him to discover that they work throughout the night with barely any rest, as if they are driven by an unknown force. When he saw improvements being added to the automobile at night without his knowledge, Dr. Harmon finally realized that something sinister was afoot. He went to Ashton to try and back out, but Ashton refused, telling him that soon, Dr. Harmon's service will no longer be required. Dr. Harmon fled Ashton's office and it is at this point that the investigators will first encounter him.

Involving the Investigators

The Keeper can easily introduce Dr. Harmon by either having him go to the investigators for help, or having the investigators witness his hit and run "accident." Regardless of how Dr. Harmon is introduced, the hit and run "accident" should happen early on.

Hit (and Hit and Hit and Hit) and Run

The investigators are, for one reason or another, outside of the law offices of Alexander Ashton. Perhaps they are enjoying a relaxing meal after a rather harrowing investigation, or meeting a contact for another investigation. Perhaps they are waiting for Dr. Harmon in response to an anxious request for an urgent meeting at a café across the street from Ashton's office.

In any case, they see a nicely dressed man rush out of the office building across the street. He seems in a hurry; a **Psychology** roll will detect that he is in a blind panic. As the investigators watch, a taxi parked next to the curb revs to life. A **Spot Hidden** roll will notice that the taxi driver is almost stiff. His face seems waxy and unnatural, with no blemishes or facial tics, just a stone-faced, determined look. As Dr. Harmon crosses the road, the taxi revs its engine; the driver hits the gas and proceeds to slam into Dr. Harmon who goes flying and crashes to the ground in a pile of blood and bone (**SAN** Loss 1/1D6). The driver quickly backs up and barrels off down the road with a squeal of rubber, unless you decide that Dr. Harmon managed to survive the initial hit. In this case, the taxi runs over him several times and then takes off. A **Spot Hidden** roll will be able to grab a quick snapshot of the license plate on a smartphone, a Hard **INT** roll will even allow an investigator to remember it. If anyone tries to stop the taxi, the driver will not hesitate to run into them. Dodge or Jump rolls will allow an investigator to jump out of the way without getting hit by the car; otherwise they suffer 3D6+3 damage. Investigators who think quickly may push Dr. Harmon out of the way with a Hard **DEX** roll, but saviors will be hit by the car unless they make an additional **Dodge** or **Jump** roll.

Whether Dr. Harmon lives or dies, it will not be long before an ambulance and the police arrive at the scene. Statements will be taken from everyone on the scene, with the police focusing on trying to get details about the taxi. A **Spot Hidden** roll will see a second finely dressed man, Alexander Ashton, exit his office and talk to several police and people, trying to "find out what happened" and generally insert himself into the police investigation.

If Dr. Harmon is alive, the investigators will also notice that Harmon and Ashton keep their eyes on each other. Harmon is obviously afraid, eager to get away from Ashton. Dr. Harmon will grab the nearest investigator by the arm and whisper, "Please, don't leave me alone with him. He is putting us in terrible danger. Grab what you can and meet me at the hospital so I can get away. Please." He will then stick an apartment key in the investigator's hand along with a business card with an address on it.

If Dr. Harmon died, the investigators will still see Ashton trying to dig up business. When he thinks that no one is looking, Ashton actually spits on the corpse of the doctor and then returns to his office. Looking through Dr. Harmon's pockets will find an apartment key and a wallet; his driver's license and business cards have his home address on it, as well as his

Apple iPhone. (Fortunately, his right thumb is available and unmangled to unlock it.)

If an investigator has a chance to look through Dr. Harmon's iPhone (either by presenting law credentials or perhaps a **Sleight of Hand** roll), they will find that one of the last numbers called is Alexander Ashton's office. A sign in front of the building he exited identifies it as Ashton's office. Flipping through the photos will find pictures of various engine parts. The good doctor was obviously building something. The last few pictures are taken in a dark garage. Several men in overalls are welding and building some sort of large contraption. In the light of the welding torches, their faces look almost waxen and artificial, similar to the taxi driver's. A **SAN** loss of 0/1 is appropriate, though the investigator is not sure just what is so unsettling about this photo.

Harmon's Apartment

The address is a small apartment in a brownstone, only a few blocks from Ashton's office. Entering the apartment finds a small living room, bedroom, kitchen and bathroom. It isn't much but it is homey. A small desk with a few years' old desktop computer sits next to a window. The desk is covered with a few dirty plates, food wrappers and cups. Between this and a worn out comfy chair, it is obvious that Harmon spent a lot of time at this computer. Looking through the desk drawers and bookshelves will find a few pieces of information that may be of interest to investigators:

- A business card for Alexander Ashton, a solo practitioner who bills himself out as an intellectual property attorney. A successful **Law** roll (to have heard of him) or **Library Use** roll (to dig up information about him) reveals that he has handled several patent and trademark applications for very large corporations, including any shady, Mythos-influenced corporations that you may wish to use. Written on the back is a handwritten note: "We can help with $$$. Call me."

- A binder, which contains property tax receipts and a deed signed for an old service station. The building is not far, about 20 minutes away. Included are several utility bills. Looking through them, the investigators can see they are rather large, almost as if someone had the power on nonstop for a sizable facility.

- Several books on the history of the automobile and combustion engines, plus several engineering books, fill up most of the bookshelves in the apartment.

- A bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. degrees in mechanical engineering hang on the walls.

Booting up the computer will find a few more clues for investigators.

- Several drafts of unpublished papers on alternative fuel sources, written by Dr. Harmon. He seems to believe that steam may be the best alternative though he is still open to other sources. A **Science** (**Engineering**) roll suggests that he is tap-dancing around cold fusion ideas and that his fuel ideas are dubious. Simple Internet research leads the investigators to conclude that the weight of scientific authority is that cold fusion (a fusion reaction achieved at ambient temperatures) is thought impossible.

- An Excel file containing financial reports on some sort of project. An **Accounting** roll will determine that Dr. Harmon was hurting for money until rather recently, when a large influx of cash is added into the budget. The notes next to this entry read "angel fund research funding."

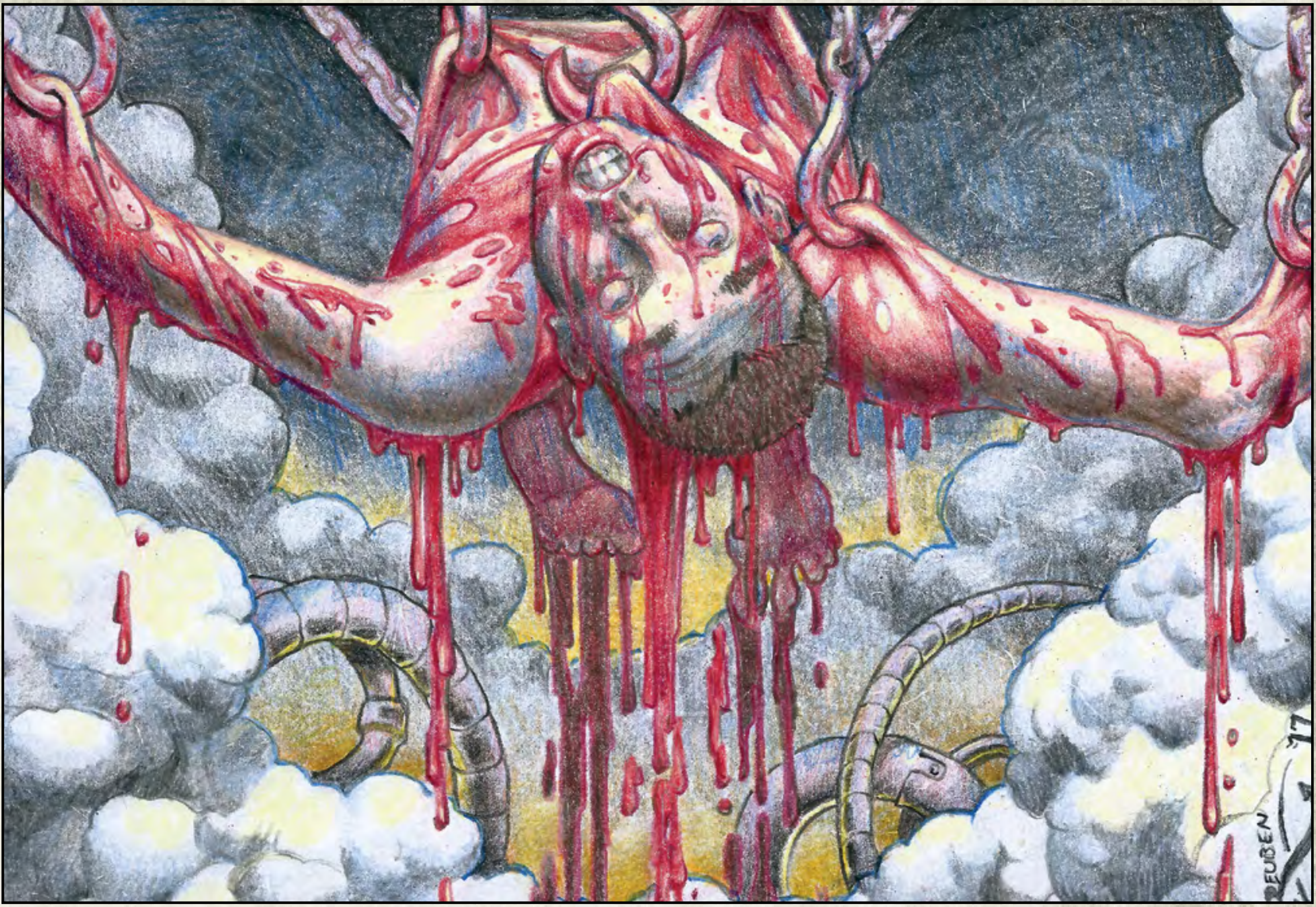
- A **Computer Use** roll finds a rather extensive Internet search on Alexander Ashton and his various corporate clients (including any Mythos-influenced corporations that you may wish to make use of) in the cache.

- A second **Computer Use** roll also finds searches for both artificial life and intelligent machines in the cache. Most of the results are science fiction and horror related, though several of these searches were done through scientific sites as well.

- CAD (computer aided design) software, which if booted up contains notes and blueprints of Dr. Harmon's current project. A **Mechanical Repair** or **Science** (**Engineering**) roll will determine that he was designing a large automobile, although the engine seems to not be gasoline driven. A **Science** (**Engineering**) roll will be able to glean both this and the fact that the engine is steam driven. The car is larger than most, and almost resembles the front of a locomotive in design. A Hard **Science** (**Engineering**) roll leaves the investigator puzzled as to how the steam engine is supposed to be fueled although again, cold fusion concepts are hinted at.

The Taxi Company

Following up on the taxi will take a bit of leg work. Enough leg work (quickly accomplished with the license plate number) discovers that the taxi is licensed to the Big Yellow Taxi Company. If looking through criminal records, they will find that the taxi was reported stolen a day before the hit and run incident. Checking in at the Big Yellow Taxi Company will allow the investigators to get a statement from the stolen taxi's former driver, while Joni Mitchell plays in the background. He is obviously shaken, claiming that he was jumped by a single guy wearing overalls with an unmoving wax face. They had a scuffle and he almost broke his hand trying to punch the guy: "It was like punching the side of a car. He didn't even flinch!" The taxi will turn up a few days later, in a rough side of town.



Alexander Ashton

The law offices of Alexander Ashton are rather swanky. His masters have been rather good to him. It will take a lot to make Ashton talk if he is approached head on, likely some amount of violence. An opposed **Law** or **Intimidate** roll may be required if the investigators try scaring him with jail time for his involvement in Dr. Harmon's death. Assume Ashton has a **Law** skill of 75% in such instances, but an **Intimidate** skill of only 25%.

Otherwise, the investigators may attempt to sneak into his offices, or otherwise infiltrate them, when Ashton is not present. His secretary is easily distracted and falls for reasonably well-planned ruses. Keepers should assume that there is a 55% chance Ashton is in his office.

The most that Ashton will voluntarily say is that he was instructed to deliver financing, assistance, and research materials to Dr. Harmon. He will show the proper financial documents if he loses the opposed **Law** roll. The assistants provided were three men that he did not know and he has no idea where to find them. The identity of the corporate benefactor may have to be beaten out of him. If it is, it can be a Mythos-influenced corporation known to the investigators, or lead to a maddeningly complex web of interrelated companies, ultimately an Escher-maze of circular ownership.

If the investigators sneak in, a **Computer Use** roll will give them access to his records. The research materials seem to be copied from some sort of old book. It contains plans for some sort of engine, though a **Science** (**Engineering**) roll notices several parts that should not work as intended. A **Cthulhu Mythos** roll, or an Extreme **Library Use** roll, will determine these comes from an 1897 German book titled *Die Höllenmaschinen (The Infernal Machines)*.

The Garage

The garage appears deserted when the investigators arrive. The doors are locked; **Locksmith** or Hard **STR** rolls will allow the investigators access. The windows have been smeared with grease to make them harder to peek into, but will easily shatter. A **Listen** roll will detect sounds of activity from inside, including human shrieks of pain.

Any loud entry will attract the three Gear Men, who have just finished building the Tick-Tock Man's newest shell, The Steam Engine. The Steam Engine will be in the main garage, and suspended over the open hood of the Engine is a man impaled on hooks and drawn up by chains. He has been slashed open and is bleeding to death right down inside of the engine compartment. At the Keeper's option, if Dr. Harmon survived, it could be him, otherwise it will be a random homeless person. Either way, a **SAN** loss of 1/1D6 is appropriate. A Hard **Medicine** roll will be needed to safely remove the sacrifice without killing him.

The Gear Men are dressed as mechanics in blue overalls.

In actuality, they are mechanical men of gears and wires, with plastic, emotionless masks stretched over the fronts of their blank faces. If their overalls are torn away, a withered human heart, encased in glass, is seen with wires extending from the heart into the gears and cogs (**SAN** loss is 0/1 to see them with their fake faces, 1/1D4 once their inhumanity becomes apparent). They are servitors of the Tick-Tock Man and will do whatever it takes for the avatar to survive.

The Steam Engine is a large, long, and heavily armored automobile, with a massive grill on the front of the car. It looks like something out of a 1940s science fiction story. Several modifications have been made by the Gear Men to assist Nyarlathotep in his joyride from hell, including a hopper to throw in human sacrifices and an apparently functional cold fusion reactor.

The Steam Engine roars to life as the investigators approach, taking 1D4 rounds to warm up his form. Once ready, he will peel out and burn rubber, right through the closed garage doors and anyone who gets in his way.

The investigators have several options for dealing with the Tick-Tock Man. The Keeper should entertain any decent plan, but the Steam Engine should be difficult to defeat once it gets going. If the investigators have access to heavier weaponry, they may be able to make a dent. Otherwise they will have to find some way to lay an effective trap for the Tick-Tock Man. It will tear through the city, tear through traffic and pedestrians, tear through buildings, and tear through most police roadblocks or box-ins. Spike strips do not even slow it down. To make matters worse, as it goes, other machines become unpredictable; other cars start following it, setting picks and creating roadblocks for it, forming convoys. Anything with any kind of sensor capacity or artificial intelligence takes its side.

Die Höllenmaschinen (The Infernal Machines)

Sanity Loss: 1D6
Cthulhu Mythos: +4 percentiles
Mechanical Repair: +5 percentiles
Mythos Rating: 5
Study: 3 weeks
Spells Available: Construct (Contact) Gear Men, Construct Tick-Tock Man (Contact Nyarlathotep), Purge Infernal Device (Dismiss Nyarlathotep/Tick-Tock Man).

This rare book is long out of print, but an Extreme **Luck** roll, or Extreme **Library Use** roll may be able to turn up a copy. The author, a Dr. Hans Spengla, rambles about how machines are said to have their own thoughts and language and can teach us many things if we only listen. It mixes Victorian-era metaphysics (aether and the "unseen world") with nascent automotive technology and tries to integrate the two. Research into Spengla reveals that his doctorate was actually in theology, and that in 1898 he was arrested and executed for burning victims alive in his furnaces for use in his experiments.

The Steam Engine would have difficulty climbing out of deep water (although it can) and more difficulty escaping a narrow, deep pit. At the Keeper's discretion, the spell *Dismiss Nyarlathotep* (available in *Die Höllenmaschinen* and perhaps accessible from it according to the dictates of dramatic pacing) may also be of use in thwarting The Steam Engine.

Rewards and Repercussions

If the investigators eventually destroy the Tick-Tock Man, steam rises from the wreckage in a vaguely monstrous form (0/1D10 **SAN** Loss) and shoots off into the sky. Investigators gain 1D8 **Sanity** points for destroying the avatar, plus an additional 1D6 if they managed to save Dr. Harmon. If they fail, the Tick-Tock Man eventually escapes the city (causing a great deal of death and destruction) and drives off into the sunset, to prowl the highways and crush anyone that may be in the way of Nyarlathotep's plans. Investigators should lose 1D8 for knowing that they have unleashed an Outer God on the world.

GEAR MEN

STR 75	CON 90	SIZ 50	INT 90	POW 20
DEX 30	APP 1	EDU 0	SAN 0	HP 14

Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 6

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10), 1D3+db. Variously armed.

Wrench 50% (25/10), 1D8+db

Welding Torch 20% (10/4), 2D6

Skills: Drive Automobile 55%, Electrical Repair 90%, Mechanical Repair 90%, Science (Engineering) 90%.
Defenses: 2-points of armor; cannot be impaled.
SAN Loss: 0/1 to see them fully clothed. 1/1D4 to see them unclothed in their full mechanical horror.

TICK-TOCK MAN, Automobile Form

STR N/A	CON 250	SIZ 245	INT 390	POW 475
DEX N/A				HP 49

Damage bonus: N/A
Build: 3
Move: 28

ATTACKS

Steam Breath 90% (45/18), damage 1D6 +2

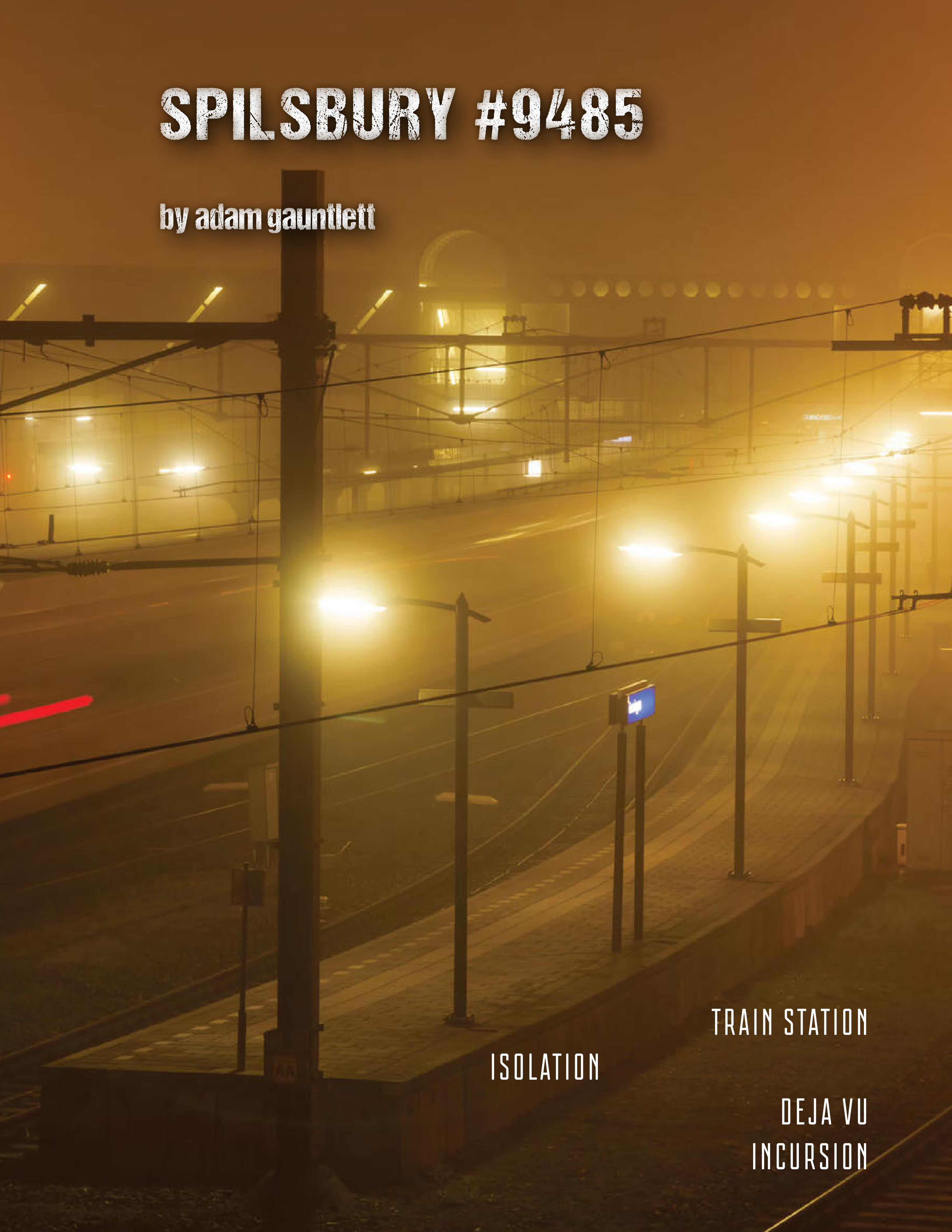
Ram 70% (37/15), damage 4D6

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Drive Automobile 100%.
Defenses: May spend 5 POW to regain 1 HP. 12 points of armor.
Spells: May control any machine.
SAN Loss: 1/1D8 when The Steam Engine's true identity becomes known.

SPILSBURY #9485

by adam gauntlett



TRAIN STATION

ISOLATION

DEJA VU

INCURSION

Introduction

Disposing of corpses in trunks, by rail or otherwise, was a popular means of murder in the 1920s and 1930s, a fashion started by the killer Crossman in 1902, who sent Mrs. Simpson packed in a tin case. Three years later, Arthur Deveraux sent his wife and twin children to a furniture depository packed in an airtight container, and so a tradition began. However, later exponents of the art used less airtight means of disposal, which meant that the contents decayed, liquefied, and leaked.

In 1932, two shattered occult investigators returned to London after a series of unpleasant rail adventures throughout Europe. One, in his insanity, murdered the other and stuffed her body into a less than airtight steamer trunk. This particular steamer trunk, however, had been carried by the investigators off of a certain train trapped in an endless, extradimensional run. They used it during the course of a perilous investigation to store a variety of occult tomes, sinister artifacts, and recovered specimens.

The disposal attempt failed and came to the attention of Scotland Yard. Sir Bernard Spilsbury, a famed forensic surgeon, carried out the autopsy, and his evidence led to the conviction and execution of the murderer. In Sir Bernard's card files the case is #9485: *Cave & Sons cadaver, Liverpool Street.*

However, as the police and Sir Bernard discovered, solving the crime would not be the end of the matter. The steamer trunk, marinated in occult energies, stuffed full of sinister artifacts and papers, preserved out of time for decades by a miscast Gate spell, and finally drenched in blood, took on an existence of its own. It disappeared from the evidence locker, only to reappear again and again over the decades.

Its first reappearance was in 1941, at the height of the Blitz bombings, which allowed the authorities to pass off the carnage that attended its unexpected arrival at Liverpool Street Station as a war atrocity. One witness was able to describe the trunk, and though his report was swiftly suppressed by military intelligence, the information leaked out to the public. After this incident, MI5 opened its file on Spilsbury #9485.

The trunk subsequently reappeared four times over the next few decades, always at train stations between Liverpool Street and Cambridge. In each instance, it arrived on a late train and was initially picked up by station staff who, alerted by its peculiar smell and stains, called the police. Events unfolded quickly each time following its appearance, but due to the lack of survivors, reports are sketchy as to what happened next.

What happens is this: as the trunk is out of time and tainted with energies from Beyond, it both reshapes its surroundings to be more acceptable to it, and also attracts the attention of certain alternate dimension entities first described by inventor Crawford Tillinghast. Anyone so careless as to be near the trunk at that time is drawn in and devoured by the inhabitants of that alien environment.

Involving the Investigators

The investigators get involved by being unlucky enough to be on-site when the trunk appears again. This may mean that they are late night travelers, station staff, cleaners, vendors, homeless and scrounging shelter at the station, police called in after the trunk appears, or the like.

There are two special groups who get called in after the trunk appears, and the investigators might be members of the first group: the Spilsburys. This civilian scientific team is based at Magdalen College, Oxford, where Sir Bernard studied. Sir Bernard left his notes, including the information he compiled about #9485, to Magdalen, and ever since the 1941 incident there have been Magdalen scholars, usually postgraduates, keeping watch. The group disguises itself as a traditional student club devoted to forensic sciences. When the trunk shows up and the station staff call the police, the Spilsburys are informed through back channels and police connections established long ago, and can show up quickly at the scene. To date, they've never been quick enough and the trunk is long gone when they arrive, but there's always a first time. The Spilsburys have no MI5 affiliation and do not know that the clean-up team exists.

The second group is an MI5 clean-up team, accompanied by UK Special Forces soldiers. Its job is to sterilize the area, recover any physical evidence, and cover up the rest in a blanket of Defence Advisory Notices. Investigators can never come from this second group.

Success in this scenario is survival and the body count is likely to be high. An improved success is possible if the investigators translate the occultist's notes and use them to complete the Gate spell, since it's this spell that ultimately provides the link between the alternate dimension and shattered space-time. Casting this spell will seal off the link and remove the trunk from our plane of existence for good.

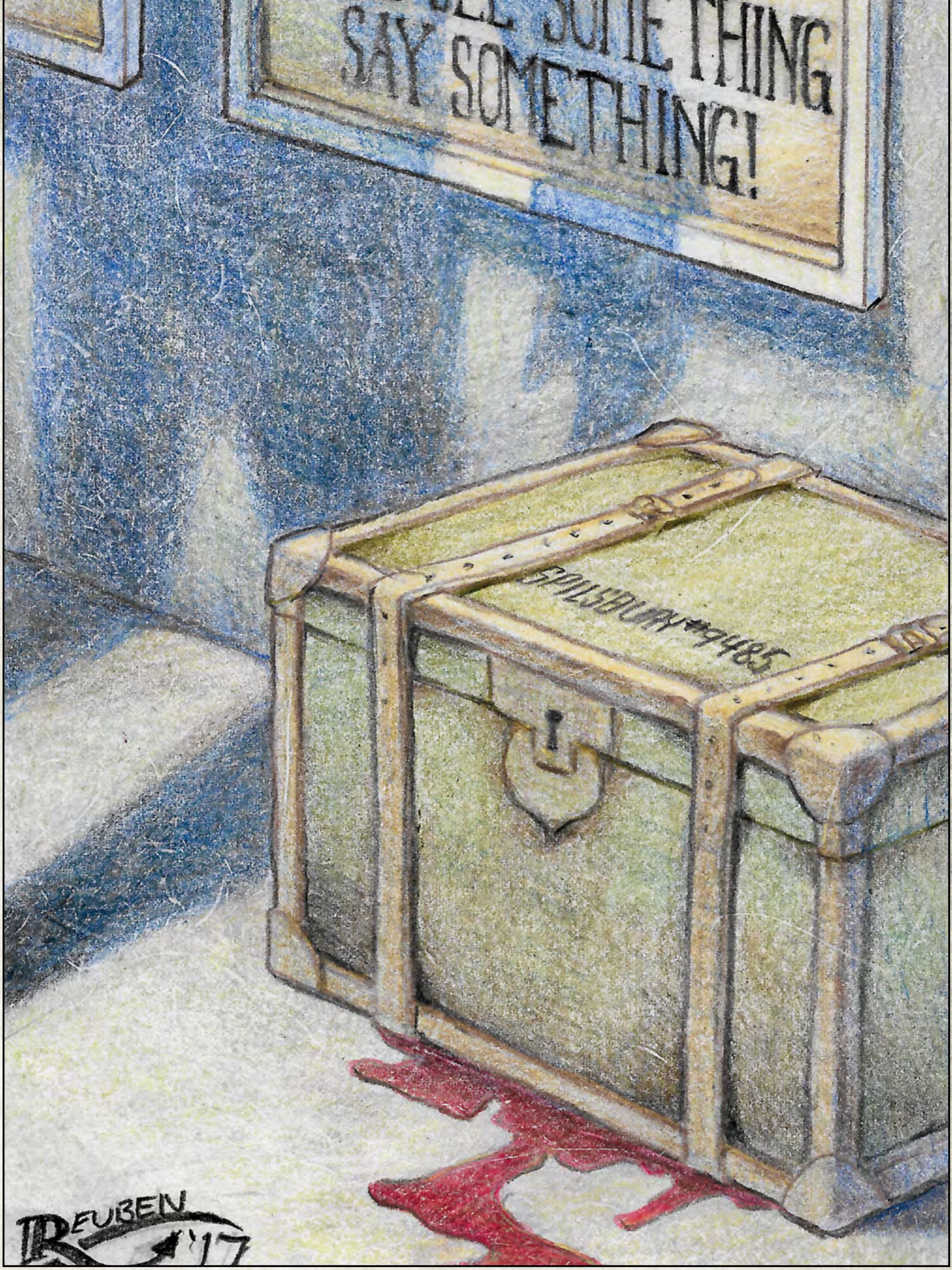
The Trunk

The trunk is the focus of the scenario. As it warps time around it, its contents alter. The 1932 version has a corpse inside and little else. The 1920s version lacks the corpse but instead has clothes, coins and letters, customs stamps and tags which indicate that the owner must have taken it across Europe as far as Constantinople. It may also have any number of tomes or occult artifacts in it. The 1890s version has clothes, coins, and letters, but all are English in origin.

It's up to the Keeper which version of the trunk the investigators have; it can change type at any time without warning. All versions of the trunk are covered in blood and decayed flesh on the inside and the leaks and smells that this causes are the first sign of trouble. **SAN** loss is 0/1D3 to see the gore-flecked trunk.

The trunk itself is an H.J. Cave & Sons steamer trunk. It is covered in leather and has a flat top. It is a little over three feet deep, slightly less wide, and a little over five feet long. H.J. Cave is a famous manufacturer and the trunk is of good

Spilsbury #9485


...OU SEE SOMETHING
SAY SOMETHING!
SPILSBURY #9485
REUBEN '17

quality, though not one of Cave's most expensive models; it was probably bought by someone middle class with upper-class aspirations. Though vintage, it lacks the age marks that one would expect of something over a hundred years old. The leather is scuffed and the trunk has seen hard use; even without the blood and stains, it wouldn't attract interest at auction. There is an identification mark, Spilsbury #9485, written in black letters on the lid.

Inside, it has a basic tray system with a hat box, a shirt compartment, a coin box, and a document box. The contents of the document box can include:

1897: letters from occultist Randolph Alexis, whose Gate spell sparks off this unfortunate sequence of events. Alexis advises his son concerning the principles of magic and Gate travel, but he does so in alchemical cypher, which means the investigators need to make a Hard **Occult** check to understand them. Investigators with **Computer Use** can devise software to translate the text and this is a Regular check. The letters contain enough information to cobble together a means of closing the connection to the alternate dimension forever, see below.

1920s: letters from various people to their relatives and friends, with information on what to do should the people writing the letters 'fail in the incredible task I have chosen to accomplish.' It's all very purple prose, but a **Psychology** roll shows that the writers believe everything they say, even the impossible bits.

1920s: a scroll fragment. This is of uncertain age, written in a combination of archaic Arabic and Old Turkish. What can be understood deals with depravity, vice, and skinning corpses. Though the scroll is of no use in this scenario, the dimensional beings are attracted to it and will make a point of eating whoever carries it first.

1932: an alchemical diagram. This is glued to the bottom of the documents case and a successful **Occult** roll can determine that the intent was to create a kind of binding curse, sealing up the spirit of whoever was in the trunk. At the bottom of the diagram is written: "You would have done this to me, so I do it to you first."

Other contents include:

1920s: the arm from a statue. This is a piece of ceramic statuary that changes color in different hues of light. At night it is a pulsing green, while in artificial light it is dark brown with a reddish tint. It glows with especial strength wherever it has been touched by human blood. It is a perfect model of a male left arm and judging by its design, it is intended to be part of a larger piece. So long as someone is looking at it, the arm stays where it is, but if not carefully watched, it will crawl away. **SAN** loss is 1/1D4+1 to see it try to crawl away; it will not attack and cannot be effectively damaged.

1920s: a Webley revolver and a dozen rounds of ammunition, hidden in the hat box.

1932: the dismembered, liquefying remains of a naked woman, aged mid-30s. Identifying marks include a scar on her left torso, probably a knife wound which healed poorly. This scar conclusively links the corpse to Sir Bernard's 1932 forensic investigation. **SAN** loss is 1/1D4+1.

TRACK MARKS

This scenario could easily be linked to "**Whose Fuel Is Men and Stones,**" as the solo investigator makes his way around the London Underground. This could be an opportunity for the ISIS recruiter to save the investigator, creating an element of trust between the two and overcoming any prior investigator suspicions.

The Train Station

The train station itself will, after the trunk appears, change thanks to the time distorting effect that the trunk creates. As British train stations tend not to change a great deal, even over many decades, this effect may be subtle, and includes:

- Election posters from 1964, Harold Wilson (Labour) versus Alec Douglas-Home (Conservative).
- Newspapers from 1982, with front-page articles about the Falklands War.
- The heavy gunpowder stink of fireworks (Guy Fawkes).
- Radio broadcasts from Lord Haw-Haw, the German wartime propagandist, or Top of the Pops (1960s version) on nearby television screens.
- Unseasonable weather, including heavy snowfall (from January 1987's 20-inch deep snowstorms) or record heat (from the summer of 1976).
- A blue police box. It has a phone, which can be used to call for help.

Research

The investigators may turn to the Internet to find out more about the trunk. A Hard **Computer Use** is needed to get a signal, as Wi-Fi networks are unreliable in areas where space-time boundaries have been shattered. Success means that the investigators can access the Internet (see **Ordinary Sites** and **Official Site**, below).

Ordinary Sites

Several urban legend websites mention the trunk as a harbinger of doom, linking it to dozens of disappearances and presumed deaths. The links with the most information concern the 1941 incident in which 34 people reportedly died; one witness describes 'a strange blue glow' that enveloped the blast site. At the time this was ascribed to a new Nazi weapon. (In fact, it was an aftereffect of exposure to the alternate dimension; the witness' pineal gland was stimulated, allowing her to partially see the Tillinghast Effect, but luckily she was far enough away not to experience anything else.)

The trunk is supposed to have appeared four times, and each time people died. The Spilsburys have a website but it is password protected; if hacked (Hard **Computer Use** to accomplish), it links the trunk to occultist Randolph Alexis and suggests that his papers may hold the key to solving the problem.

Official Site

Gives a contact telephone number to call if the trunk appears. The site is hosted by Military Intelligence, but deliberately obfuscates the exact department. Calling this number summons the MI5 clean-up team.

Reacting

The investigators may call for help. As with the Internet, phone lines are unreliable and may intersect with other time periods; the investigators may end up in a 1940s-era switchboard operated system, for example. However, if they get through to the police, the authorities say to keep calm and stay there. Help is on the way. This also summons the MI5 clean-up team.

While the trunk is present, a portion of the station is cut off from reality. It's up to the Keeper how large this area is and which part of the station it envelops. During this scenario, no trains will arrive at or leave the station, and trains stopped at the station may change without warning—from electric to diesel or steam.

Using occultist Alexis' Gate notes can help the investigators create a Gate variant that closes the dimensional connection. This ritual requires the permanent sacrifice of 25 **POW** and takes 10 minutes to cast, during which time the extra-planar entities become agitated and prone to attack. They can be distracted by decoys or brave sacrifices. For example, wrapping the scroll found in the 1920s trunk around a rock and throwing it far away will distract them. The arm can be used to distract them. Running and screaming also works to draw them off.

While the trunk is active, there is a link between an alternate dimension and current reality through which time bleeds, causing all of the effects described above and one other. It stimulates the pineal glands in the brains of people within the area of effect, allowing them to see and be seen by extraplanar entities. To those within the effect, it can seem as though the surrounding buildings, fixtures, and trains are emitting a bluish tint or are semi-transparent. This effect lasts as long as the trunk is present; it will eventually sink back into the alternate dimension, leaving behind a few marks of its passing—newspapers from 1982, unseasonable puddles of melting snow, and few, if any, witnesses.

The extra-planar entities are slow moving at first. Languidly floating in mid-air, they pay little attention to humans. They may grab an NPC or two as a light snack. **Stealth** helps avoid their attention. As the investigation progresses, they become agitated, eventually going on full assault.

Rewards and Repercussions

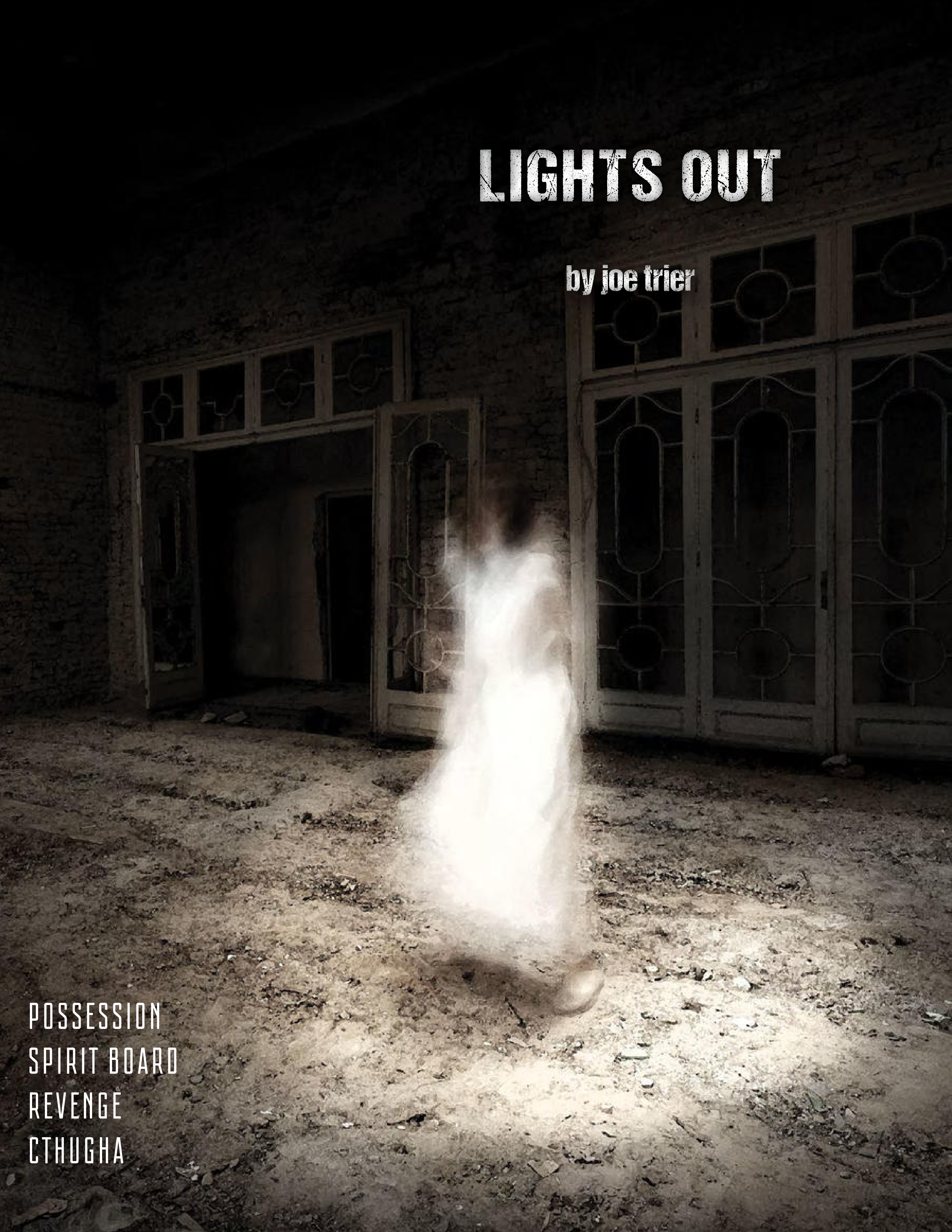
Surviving results in a gain of 1D6 **SAN**. Closing the Gate permanently results in an award of 1D6 **SAN**.

EXTRA-PLANAR ENTITIES (as many as needed)

STR 85 CON 50 SIZ 35 INT 35 POW 65
DEX 110 HP 9
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 12 (undulates gracefully through the air)

ATTACKS

Bite 60% (30/12), 1D10+db (only possible after successful Grapple with its tentacles).
Grapple: 75% (37/15), allows Bite attack.
Armor: None
Skills: Track 65%, Phase Through Solid Matter 65%.
Defenses: None above base.
Special: These entities can move through solid matter—a stone wall, a train engine—as though it does not exist. As far as the entity is concerned, it doesn't. However, it may take a little time for it to do so, and a phase failure means that the entity is caught up in the solid material which, from its perspective, is like walking face-first through a cobweb.
Spells: One in three entities can cast Shriveling. When it does, the target takes on a blueish hue and its flesh begins to melt and become translucent. While this does damage as per the spell, the main benefit from the entities' perspective is that it makes the target tastier. This means all entities nearby will concentrate on that target in the next attack round, in a feeding frenzy.
Sanity Loss: 1/1D4+1



LIGHTS OUT

by joe trier

POSSESSION
SPIRIT BOARD
REVENGE
CTHUGHA

Introduction

EMOTIONALLY DEVASTATED BY THE TRAGIC DEATH OF HER BOYFRIEND DANNY IN A CAR ACCIDENT, ALICE MILLER (AGE 15) HAS SPENT THE LAST THREE WEEKS IN HER ROOM, BARELY EATING, HARDLY TALKING TO ANYONE, AND DESPERATELY TRYING TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE ACCIDENT.

About a week ago, she started using an old Ouija board to try and commune with Danny, roping in her younger brother Spencer (12) to help with the planchette. Last night at 11pm, they made contact with a spirit and today, Alice is missing. The police aren't interested yet as she has only been missing since last night, so her parents have contacted the investigators for help.

What happened to Alice: Around the time of Alice's boyfriend's accident, a small cult known as "Les Gardiens de la Flamme Sacrée," gathered together for the last time. Following the teachings of their sacred text, they made the necessary preparations to release a Great Old One named Ifrit from his 400-year-long imprisonment within the pages of a book. The cult leaders gathered their followers together before lighting themselves and the church aflame, the act of self-immolation completing the summoning.

TRACK MARKS

"Ifrit" is posited here as an avatar of Cthugha that seeks to escape its imprisonment by preying upon the mystical curiosity of humanity and its inherent fascination with fire. It has seeped itself into the folklore and myth of a variety of Middle Eastern traditions, a spreading and consuming meme that promises rewards to those who plumb the secrets of controlling it. It presents itself as a deal-making, if mercurial entity, trying to put a comprehensible face on the incomprehensible by giving it agency. This version of Cthugha takes another shot at freedom in **Whose Fuel is Men and Stones** above.

Unfortunately, the spell wasn't powerful enough; rather than releasing Ifrit, all that the sacrifice managed to achieve was to awaken him. The cult leaders, rather than dying, were freed from the chains of their bodies and have spent the last three weeks as spirits wandering the city, lost. Until, that is, Alice unwittingly summoned one of them with her Ouija board. Alice has now been possessed by Claude Dumont, the cult's high priest. Alice/Claude first plans to summon the other cult leaders; next, he needs to recover the book; and lastly, he needs to finish the summoning of Ifrit.

Involving the Investigators

The characters may be private investigators called in by Alice's mother, sympathetic police detectives, or they could even be family friends or relatives, opening up the scenario to a wide variety of possible investigators/backgrounds.

The Miller House

Olivia Miller, Alice's mother, is extremely worried, whereas her father, Carl, seems less so, possibly due to the short time she's been missing. They will tell the investigators about Danny's car accident and about Alice herself. However, they don't know about the Ouija board incident.

Alice's Room

This is reasonably tidy and organised, with school books and a few novels and magazines. There is no mobile phone (Alice took it with her), but there is a computer. Photos on the walls above the bed or on social media reveal Alice to be a dark-haired, pretty although bookish girl. There are also several photos of her best friends, Clare and Tammy, as well as many pictures of her deceased boyfriend Danny. They will also find the Ouija board and planchette under her bed (both scorched and blackened).

The computer has a number of clues that can be found using a **Computer Use** roll; a failure adds 30 minutes to the search.

- A week ago, Alice looked up how to use a Ouija board. The search revealed that you need at least two people.
- At 11:32pm the night of her disappearance, she searched for "fire + Chapel of St. Lawrence," finding one short news story from a local news channel, dated 3 weeks ago (see nearby handout). An accompanying video shows a young blonde reporter standing outside of the burning ruin of a church; a number of emergency vehicles can be seen in the background and body bags are being wheeled out in the background.
- At 11:41pm the night of her disappearance, she searched for the whereabouts of a book named *Livre Feu d'Enfer*. A short search reveals that it was recovered from the fire at the Chapel of St. Lawrence and currently resides in the care of a Professor Ormund at the local university library.

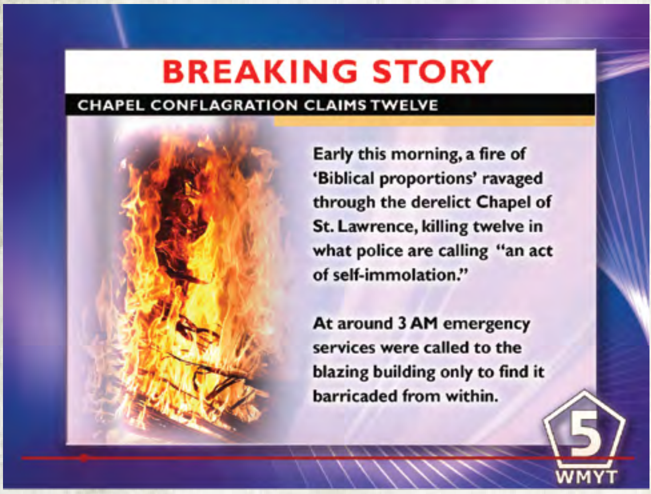
Alice's Brother

Alice's brother Spencer, has been helping her use the Ouija board for the last week. He knows some of what happened last night and, although worried about his sister, is shy about opening up to the investigators.

Successful **Spot Hidden** or **Listen** rolls reveal him lurking near the bedroom, eavesdropping. Successful **Fast Talk**, **Persuade**, or **Intimidate** checks will get him reveal what he knows. If the investigators fail a pushed roll, he will run away and will need bribing to reveal his information.

- He has been helping Alice use the Ouija board. Until last night, he had been purposely pushing the planchette, giving answers to Alice that he thought she'd like.

Lights Out Investigator Handout #1



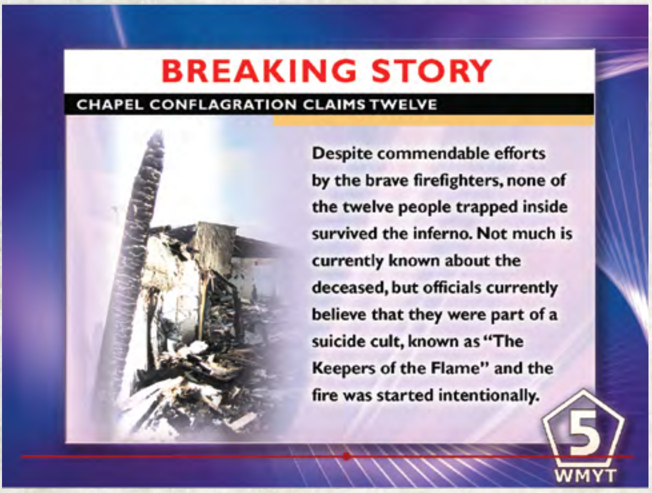
BREAKING STORY

CHAPEL CONFLAGRATION CLAIMS TWELVE

Early this morning, a fire of 'Biblical proportions' ravaged through the derelict Chapel of St. Lawrence, killing twelve in what police are calling "an act of self-immolation."

At around 3 AM emergency services were called to the blazing building only to find it barricaded from within.

5 WMYT

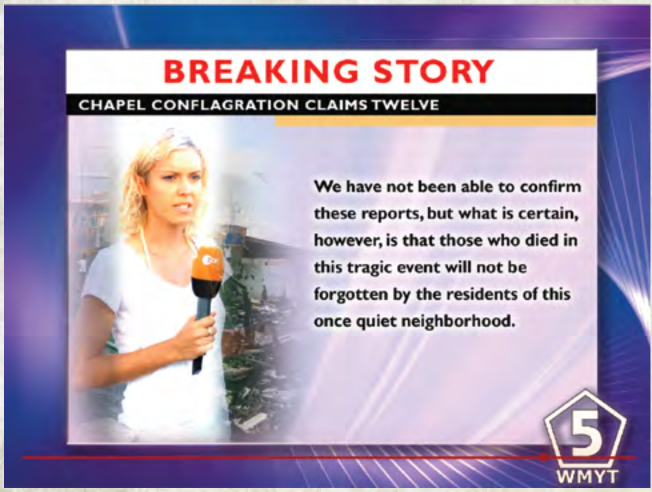


BREAKING STORY

CHAPEL CONFLAGRATION CLAIMS TWELVE

Despite commendable efforts by the brave firefighters, none of the twelve people trapped inside survived the inferno. Not much is currently known about the deceased, but officials currently believe that they were part of a suicide cult, known as "The Keepers of the Flame" and the fire was started intentionally.

5 WMYT



BREAKING STORY

CHAPEL CONFLAGRATION CLAIMS TWELVE

We have not been able to confirm these reports, but what is certain, however, is that those who died in this tragic event will not be forgotten by the residents of this once quiet neighborhood.

5 WMYT

- Last night was different. When they had started around 11pm, Alice had moved the planchette (or so he believed) and it had told Alice to blindfold him so it could tell Alice "secrets."
- She had then started to act "weird," even her voice changed. She seemed "different" before she kicked him out of her room.
- He heard her on her computer for a while, then he's sure she phoned some people. He is not sure who she called but thinks she might have phoned her friends Clare and Tammy.

Clare and Tammy

Contacting their homes will reveal that neither of them is home and their parents don't know where they are. Unlike Alice's mother, the parents are not too worried yet and haven't phoned the police.

In fact, Alice, possessed by Claude, phoned them both last night and asked them to meet her in an empty house that she had the keys for. When they arrived, they were persuaded to conduct a séance which summoned the other two cult leaders, Casimir Martin and Estelle Poncet. Like Alice, Clare and Tammy are now possessed. They are aware of everything that is happening to them but are unable to do anything to regain control of their bodies.

Alice's Father

Carl Miller is a real-estate agent and his work keys are missing. They are the keys to all the properties on his portfolio and Alice took them last night. Investigators should wonder where she might have gone if she ran away, and ask if anything is missing. If so, the keys are quickly identified as missing.

Alice chose an out-of-the-way house, 47 Rivington Drive, and has been using it as a base. He can be persuaded to give out the addresses if it is suggested that his daughter might logically be in one.

The University Library

While on their way to their next destination, it should become clear to the investigators that a major incident has happened nearby, due to the numerous sirens, snarled traffic, and emergency vehicles. Assuming they follow the sounds, they will arrive at the university library to find that the head librarian, a guard, and three students have been brutally beaten to death. Talking to witnesses will reveal:

- The attackers were three young teenagers, who match the descriptions of Alice, Clare, and Tammy.
- They pushed their way into the library and demanded a rare book. When they were denied, they began attacking all those nearby and torturing the librarian until the book was fetched.

- The book taken was the *Livre Feu d'Enfer*.
- They had been possessed of incredible strength, easily overpowering the guard.
- They had also taken delight in the murders, even going back to crush the skull of one student before leaving.

The gory details and descriptions of the possessed girls' strength should both worry the investigators and foreshadow what is to come.

PROPERTIES ON CARL MILLER'S PORTFOLIO

It takes 4D10+5 minutes to get to each property. It's up to the Keeper whether you just describe the property as empty, still has the family living in it, or whether you want to run a random encounter. A simple computer search will reveal sales listings and pictures for each property.

- 27 Oswald Rd (2 bedroom house)
- 88 Beach St (3 bedroom apartment)
- 88 Riverside Way (Industrial Unit)
- 47 Rivington Drive (2 bedroom house)
- 101 Dean Ave (3 bedroom house)

Interviewing Professor Ormund

Prof. Ormund is in his nineties and is a world-renowned expert in the occult. He is a short, animated gentleman with an exaggerated English accent. He also has a livid red burn across his face and his left hand and arm are wrapped in bandages. Both wounds were self-inflicted, caused by the influence of Ifrit within the *Livre Feu d'Enfer*, which he had been studying since it was retrieved from the burned chapel.

- Luckily, he was absent during the attack.
- Despite his expertise, he had never heard of either the cult or the book before three weeks ago, when the whole cult died in the fire.
- As soon as he saw it, he knew the book contained tremendous power, as if something both alive and powerful was trapped within its pages.
- It is written in archaic French, so he has only just begun the translation, but details the rituals used by a little known sect of Christian monks known as the 'Gardiens de la Flamme Sacrée.'
- The rituals were used to seal "The Devil" into the pages.
- If asked, he will speculate that "The Devil" could be released through a great sacrifice involving fire. He'll even point to his burns as proof of both the method of summoning and that the book has power, maybe even enough to influence those around it to immolate themselves.

47 Rivington Drive

What the investigators will encounter here depends on how quickly they decide to investigate the house.

Morning

The possessed teenagers will be at the university. Looking in through the window, the investigators will see an elaborate pentagram burned into the white carpet, with black candles on each point. This was used to summon the spirits of Casimir Martin and Estelle Poncet. They might also see a pair of legs poking out from behind a table. This is the body of the cleaner who works for Carl Miller; she surprised the teenagers, who killed her. Possessed of inhuman appetites, Casimir then decided to eat part of her, an act which he greatly enjoyed and would like to partake of again. **SAN** loss is 1/1D6 for seeing the body.

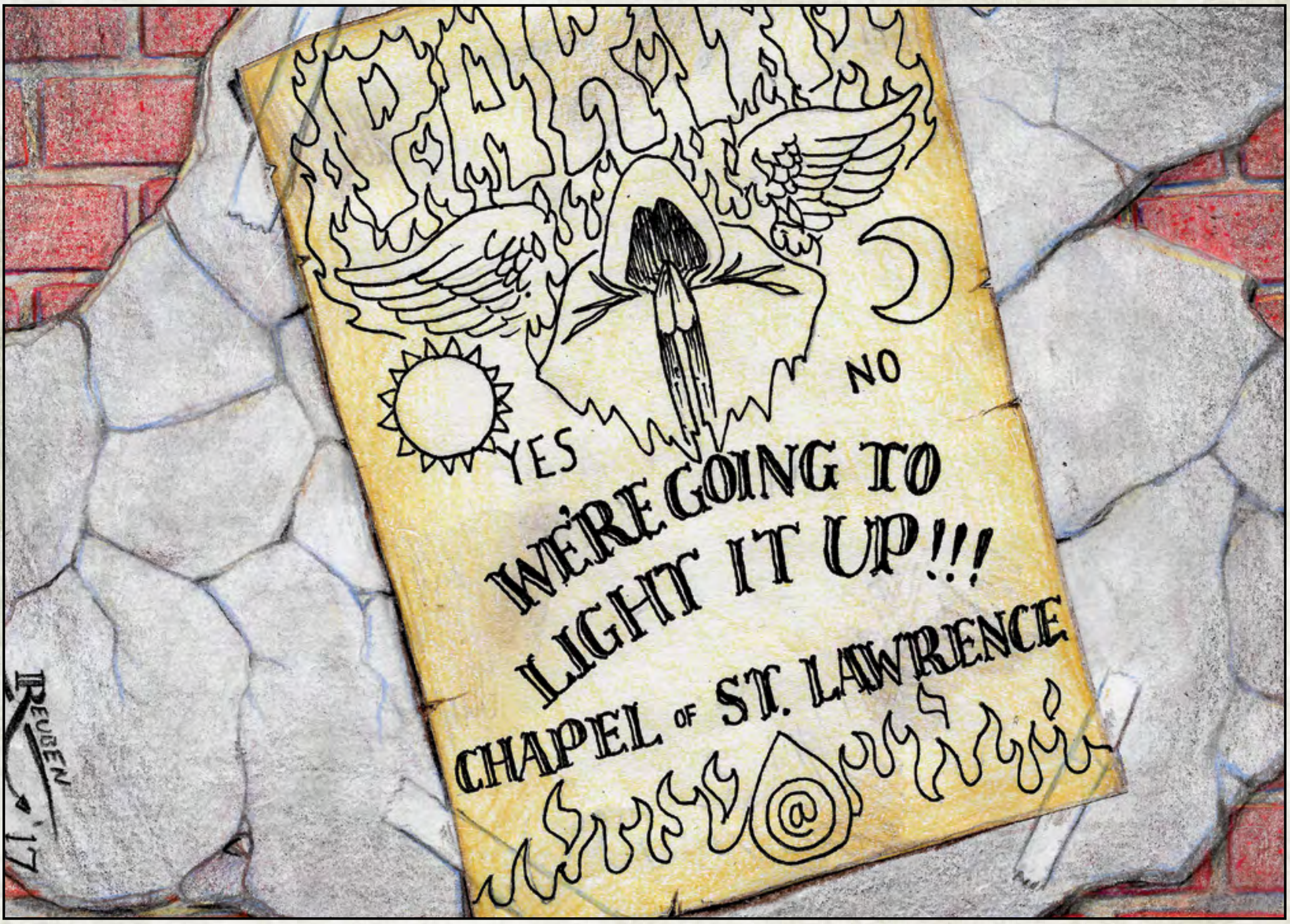
Early Afternoon to Evening

Depending on events, the teenagers may return here to study the book and to prepare for the summoning of their god. Without a cult to use as a sacrifice they have had to improvise. At 2pm, Tammy/Estelle goes to a local liquor store, kills the owner and acquires a beer keg plus a car load of booze. Meanwhile, Alice/Claude and Clare/Casimir have used the girls' contact lists and social networking pages to invite as many teenagers as they could to a party at the abandoned Chapel of St. Lawrence, starting at 10pm. Investigators may get tipped

Livre Feu d'Enfer

Sanity Loss: 1D6
Cthulhu Mythos: +4 percentiles
Language Check: Hard French
Mythos Rating: 8
Study: 12 weeks
Spells Available: Summon Ifrit (Call Cthugha), variant Mind Transfer.

Written by "Les Gardiens de la Flamme Sacrée" as part of a month long ritual that sealed the spirit of Ifrit within its pages. Anyone in close proximity to the text will start to feel the urge to self-immolate, inflicting small injuries at first, but becoming more and more severe until they burn themselves to death.



off by one of their parents or a friend of the girls that they have asked to help them.

Keeper's Note: *Use fliers, social media notifications, and the like to foreshadow the party.*

If they are surprised by the investigators, Alice/Claude and Tammy/Estelle will attempt to escape with the book, while Clare/Casimir will engage the investigators to buy them time.

Casimir is in the body of Clare, a plump, dark-haired 15-year-old girl. He will, if attacked, fight to the death. However, if Clare is killed, then Casimir's spirit is released and will attempt to possess the mind of one of the investigators using a variant *Mind Transfer* spell.

The cult's variant Mind Transfer spell allows Casimir and the other two cult leaders to possess the target and control his actions on a successful opposed **POW** vs. **POW** check, although the target remains aware of what is going on. It takes 5 rounds to cast but once it successfully starts, it cannot be stopped except by killing the caster, and the victim of a successful attack loses 1D20 **SAN**. Unlike the normal *Mind Transfer* spell, this variant only costs 5 magic points and only lasts one day (although it can be renewed). The spell is accompanied by scorching and flames, which may result in a fire. Each cultist has 18 magic points but has already used 5 today, leaving 13 (or two further possession attempts).

Only one victim can be possessed and controlled at a time. If Casimir takes over someone else, then Clare is freed, although indefinitely insane. Whether **Psychoanalysis** can get a freed Clare to be of any assistance in terms of divulging the cult's plans is up to the Keeper.

This variant does not result in permanent possession, nor render the target insensate. Rather, the target should be allowed to roll **POW** checks to regain control, once per day or whenever the possessing spirit tries to force the victim to do something fundamentally against his or her nature. You could even have Casimir jump from one investigator to another, creating as much chaos as possible, within the limitations of the 5 magic point cost of the spell. **SAN** loss is 1/1D4 for witnessing Clare/Casimir's inhuman strength. **SAN** loss is 1/1D10 for killing Clare.

Evening

Once their preparations have been made, the possessed teenagers will head to the derelict Chapel of St. Lawrence to start the party and the ritual that will free Ifrit from the confines of the book.

The Chapel of St. Lawrence

The Chapel is located in the center of a large park and overlooks a lake. It used to be part of a large estate but the manor house is now gone and the park has been open to the public for many years. A small road snakes through the park, from the main gates to the chapel itself.

If the investigators arrive before the possessed teenagers, they will find the shell of the building surrounded by police tape. The double doors are closed but not locked, and the high, glass windows have been shattered. The interior is filled with burned pews and the roof has mostly caved in and is open to the night sky. On the back wall, above the altar, is a huge depiction of a burning angel, drawn in black and red paint.

If the investigators stake out the church, groups of teenagers will begin to arrive around 10pm and music will start soon after. The possessed teenagers will arrive soon after, driving a car filled with food and drink. If accosted before they get inside, Clare/Casimir or another cultist will provide a distraction while the other two cultists head inside to try and start the ritual. If blocked completely, they will fight to the death.

If any of the girls are killed, the investigators lose **SAN** 1/1D10 and the spirits of the cultists will attempt to possess one of the partygoers and continue the ritual. Remember, once they are out of magic points from possession efforts, the cultists' spirits are lost.

If the investigators only arrive once the party has started, or if any of the possessed teenagers get inside, Alice/Claude will lock the door with a chain and padlock brought for that purpose, while Tammy/Estelle will start pouring gasoline over the pews and floorboards. Soon, the partygoers will realize what's happening, but will neither be able to escape through the door, nor have the strength to tackle the possessed teenagers. They will all begin to panic and sounds of screaming will be heard from inside. Once the gasoline is spread, Alice will set the building alight, throwing the book into the heart of the flames. If the partygoers are allowed to die, then the immense flaming form of Ifrit is summoned and lays waste to the city.

The Final Showdown

If the investigators manage to stop the summoning, probably through forcing the door open in time and freeing the partygoers, Alice/Claude will try and escape with the book. Panicking and desperate, she heads back to her parents' house. They are initially glad to see her but that quickly ends when she strikes her father, shattering his jaw, and attacks her mother.

When Alice is not found amongst the partygoers, it should become clear to the investigators that she has escaped. If they don't think of her destination themselves, you could have Alice's brother, Spencer, call one of them in a panic, saying that Alice has returned and has attacked their parents.

When the investigators arrive, Alice's house is already on fire. The parents are tied up downstairs and surrounded by smoke and flames. Meanwhile, Alice is searching the house for her brother, who is hiding under her bed.

It is up to the Keeper if the death of the family is enough of a sacrifice to summon Ifrit.

Destroying the Book

Submersion of *Livre Feu d'Enfer* in water sends Ifrit into hibernation as well as the spirits of the three head cultists. Doing twenty or more points of damage to it will destroy the book and the spirits of the three head cultists. Either of these will also release the girls from possession.

Rewards and Repercussions

Award 1D6 **SAN** for stopping the ritual and 1D6 **SAN** for each of the possessed girls that survives the scenario. Also award 1D6 **SAN** for each of Alice's family that survive the final showdown. Charge 1D10 **SAN** for each possessed girl that the investigators kill; 1D6 **SAN** for each that dies in any other way.

POSSESSED TEENAGER

STR 125	CON 50	SIZ 40	INT 65	POW 90
DEX 50	APP 55	EDU 50	SAN 0	HP 9

Damage bonus: +1D6

Build: 2

Move: 9 (slightly faster than normal human)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10), damage 1D3

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Armor: None

Skills: Credit Rating 40%, Cthulhu Mythos 17%, Drive Automobile 40%, Language (English) 55%, Listen 50%, Occult 55%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%.

Defenses: They are hidden within the bodies of teenagers, and will pretend to be the teenager to throw the investigators off guard.

Age: 15

Spells: 1D4 spells, however, use caution with smaller groups, due to the effectiveness of the variant Mind Transfer Spell and the ethical conundrum of attacking teenagers.

Indefinite Insanity: Fanatic; will do anything to summon their god.

Notes: If they are killed, then the cultists' spirits will attempt to possess an investigator or partygoer. However, if they run out of magic points in their efforts to do so, they no longer have the energy to try again and are dispelled.

Ifrit: Use the statistics for Cthugha; once summoned, it will begin to destroy the city.

BONE DEEP

by allan goodall

FUNERAL HOME
SERIAL KILLER
DISMEMBERMENT
GHOULS

Introduction

The Great Old One Mordiggian magically and painfully retains nearly-lost knowledge in the bones of selected victims (called Repositories). Upon their death, the remains of these sacred victims are gathered by The Collectors, a caste of ghouls. The Collectors reverently consume the flesh from the etched bones and prepare them for eternal storage in Mordiggian's temple in the Dreamlands. Clans of Collectors and their human acolytes exist around the world, with each clan responsible for maintaining six Repositories.

A once-human ghoul named Adeline Radford leads a clan of Collectors. She owns Vale Funeral Home, where, in human guise, she sells burial arrangements and consecrates Repositories. Facing the financial collapse of the Vale Funeral Home, Radford has sold out to a funeral home conglomerate and is preparing to leave the city for a more prosperous hunting ground elsewhere. Before she leaves the city, however, Radford must collect her remaining Repositories.

Involving the Investigators

The scenario takes place in an area with a high rate of business closings and poverty (e.g., Detroit or similar). The investigators can be police, private detectives, relatives, friends, or coworkers of the deceased.

The initial murders occur nine days before the end of the month (i.e., the 22nd in a 31-day month or the 21st in a 30-day month). It takes the ghouls and their servants two nights to fully process a Repository's bones.

A Grisly Murder

Middle-aged school teacher Elize Dufferin was found murdered in her two-story townhouse in a lower-middle class section of town. Her husband Howard, an office manager, is missing. Elize was discovered by her son, Jamie, returning home unexpectedly from college; Jamie apparently interrupted the attack but did not see the assailant(s).

Investigating the Crime Scene

The scene yields several clues:

- Elize was killed in the main floor hallway. The body has not yet been removed, causing a 0/1D3 **SAN** loss. Lying beside her is a black body bag, unrolled and unzipped—not courtesy of the coroner's office.

- Elize was slashed in the back. She has no defensive wounds.

- There is a large amount of blood in the tiny bedroom/office, on and around an overturned chair. A desk lamp, junk mail, and bills lie scattered on the floor.

- The office window overlooking the back yard is shattered. A computer, the object that broke the window, lies in the backyard amidst broken glass.

- Credit card receipts, medical receipts, and insurance statements show that both Elize and Howard have been going to an orthopedic surgeon, Dr. Michelle Trask, for over a year.

- Among the junk mail on the office floor is a letter from Vale Funeral Home. Starting next month, the Dufferin's funeral plan payments should be mailed to a new owner, Serenity, Inc. The Dufferins are assured that the terms of their plan will be honored by the new owners.

- A contract for Vale Funeral Home is filed in a cabinet. It is dated 18 months ago, for two adjacent plots.

- There is no sign of forced entry anywhere in the house except in the basement. There, a **Spot Hidden** roll notices that the vent hose was ripped from the back of the clothes dryer. Outside, the dryer vent cover was pried off the wall and hastily put back (Two ghouls slithered in through the dryer vent, carrying the body bag).

Interviewing Jamie

Jamie is genuinely distraught. He came home unannounced from college for the weekend and discovered Elize. He heard the office window shatter. He ran outside screaming for the neighbors. None of the neighbors saw anything.

Jamie describes his parents as "suffering from arthritis or something." Both of them had recently taken a lot of sick days, which was causing problems at Howard's work. They wrote a will and bought burial plots a year and a half ago, but that was before they fell ill.

Searching the Back Yard

A successful **Spot Hidden** uncovers a chunk of black plastic, identical to the body bag left behind, clinging to a piece of glass in the window frame. On the ground is a trail of blood spots that leads to, and over, the back fence. An Easy **Track** roll leads the investigator to a sewer cover. There are more blood spots on the ladder, but the trail is lost in the flowing sewage. (This was the ghouls removing Howard's body.)

Autopsy and Lab Results

Elize bled out from trauma caused by a filthy, razor-sharp blade. A blood sample from the office determines that the blood was from someone other than Elize (it was Howard's). The blood in the office matches the blood spots in the back yard.

X-rays show striations on Elize's legs and skull, similar to osteopathia striata, but more pronounced and regular. A **Medicine** roll indicates that this condition would be painful, debilitating, and eventually fatal.

When magnified, the striations appear as a form of script, triggering 0/1D4 **SAN** loss. **Cthulhu Mythos**, **Dream Lore**, or another relevant skill identifies the language as Pnathic. A **Cthulhu Mythos** roll translates the text as trivia: the eyewitness account of an unsolved murder in the 1950s, a passenger's recollection of the sinking of the *SS Morro Castle*, a detailed description of participating in the 1932 Summer Olympics as a female athlete. (Feel free to insert clues for an ongoing campaign.)

Interviewing Dr. Trask

Dr. Trask is the orthopedic surgeon treating the Dufferins. She was unable to determine the cause of their bone striations, though she suspects that the cause is environmental. She's seen over a dozen cases like theirs in the last five years.

The Dufferins' first appointment was a year ago. Osteopathia striata is itself extremely rare, but this seemed to be a rarer variant based on its pathology. Trask names other patients with a warrant or a successful **Law** roll or **Persuade** roll. She has two other active cases: Loreen Haskell, who made her first appointment a month ago, and Doug Watts.

Unsolved Cases

A successful **Library Use** roll uncovers three recent unsolved cases of suspected foul play with suspicious similarities:

- **Loreen Haskell**, a 76-year-old, retired bookkeeper: Went missing from her home in a poor section of town nine days before the Dufferin murders. Copious amounts of blood were found in her kitchen.
- **Tyler Daniels**, a 35-year-old auto mechanic, divorced: Went missing six days before the Dufferin murders. A pool of blood was found underneath a customer's car in his shop. Two kids were arrested after they were caught fencing some of Tyler's tools. They claim they saw "two guys" rush out of the shop with a big bag, and decided to help themselves. They can't identify the other "thieves."
- **Michael Bush**, a 57-year-old insurance salesman, widowed: Disappeared three days before the Dufferin murders. His car was found outside a repossessed house with dried blood caking the car's upholstery.

All three of the victims can be discovered to have bought plots from Vale Funeral Homes. Both Michael and Tyler visited their respective doctors in the last couple of months, complaining of arthritis-like aches. Loreen is another of Dr. Trask's patients.

Interviewing Doug Watts

Doug Watts, a divorced and disabled truck driver, lives in the best home in a rundown, lower-middle class neighborhood. Doug has been seeing Dr. Trask for four months. He doesn't know the Dufferins or any of Dr. Trask's other patients. He bought a burial plot from Vale Funeral Home six months ago for his mother, who had just died.

The Vale Funeral Home

Located in a decaying part of town, Vale Funeral Home is a fairly typical, small urban funeral parlor. It is well maintained, but the décor is dated. Only one of the two visitation rooms is occupied. The lighting in the building is soothing (which helps hide Radford's true appearance).

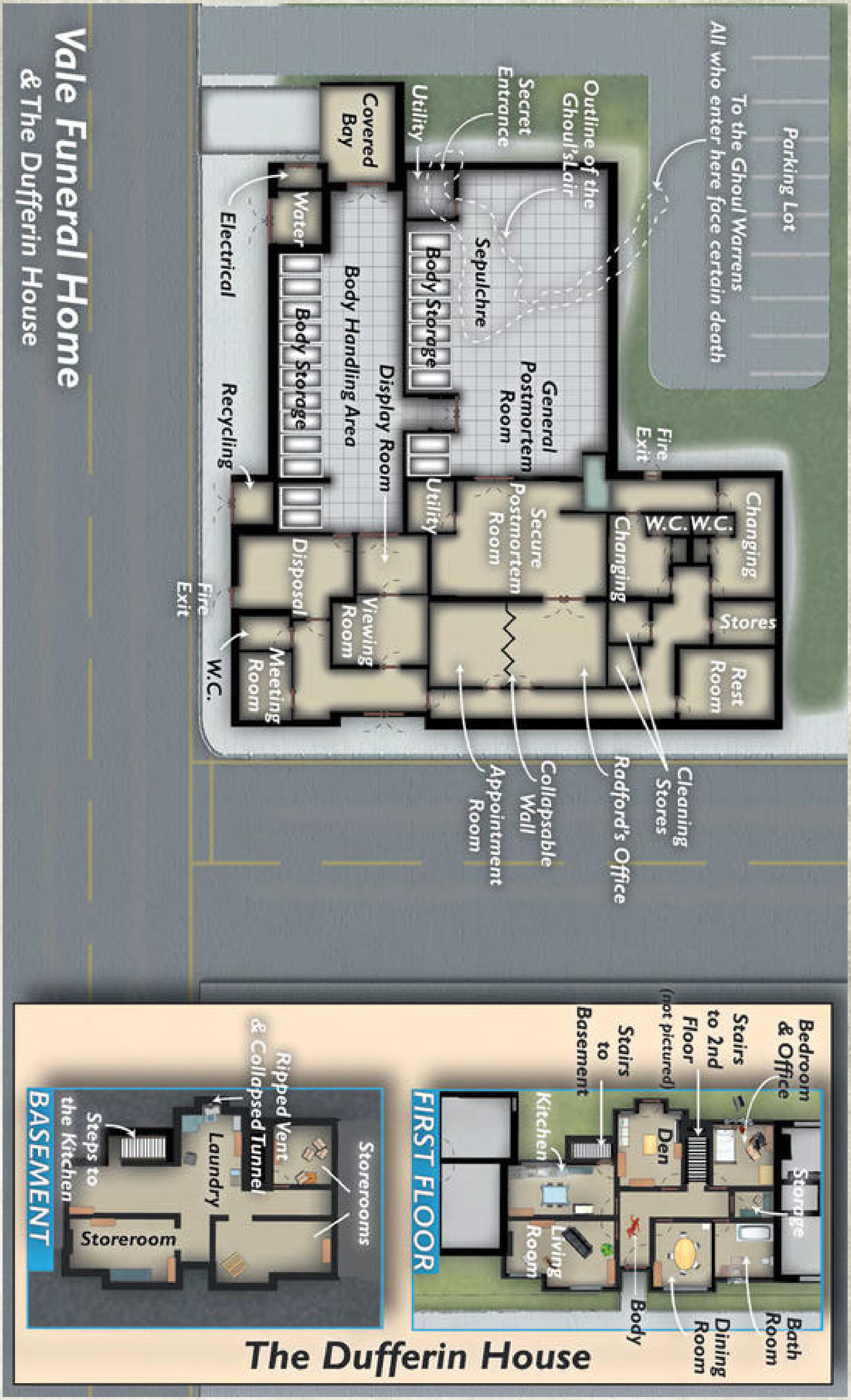
Wendy Folds, a retirement-aged Family Service Counselor, greets the investigators. Folds is professionally dressed in a jacket and skirt that were fashionable two decades ago. She has a warm, grandmotherly disposition. Folds ushers the investigators to the owner, Adeline Radford. Radford is in her late 30s or early 40s, tall, slim, and impeccably dressed. She is solemn and exudes empathy.

Radford readily admits that her grandfather founded the business in the 1920s. (She won't admit that her grandmother, Bella, founded the ghoul side of the Radford clan, or that she and Bella both stole their human guise from the same Hollywood starlet. A photo of the founders is on the wall, and should anyone look, Radford is the spitting image of Bella.) She does not seem to remember the Dufferins, but she appears shocked when she realizes they are the recent murder victims. She appears genuinely disturbed that someone is targeting her clients. If the other missing people or Doug Watts are mentioned, she confirms that they are customers:

- Loreen bought a plot for herself two months ago.
- Tyler purchased a funeral for his deceased father ten months ago.
- Michael and his family bought a funeral for his deceased wife eight months ago.

Vale Funeral Homes will close permanently at the end of the month, she admits. Radford is heartbroken at having to sell the business to a conglomerate, Serenity, Inc., due to the harsh economic climate. Their last funeral will be conducted the next day, in fact.

Radford makes a point of collecting the investigators' business cards. If an investigator doesn't have a card, she asks them to write their name and contact information on a piece of paper.


Vale Funeral Home
& The Dufferin House
Parking Lot
To the Ghoul Warrens
All who enter here face certain death
Outline of the Ghoul's Lair
Secret Entrance
Utility
Covered Bay
Water
Electrical
Sepulchre
Body Storage
Body Handling Area
Body Storage
General Postmortem Room
Display Room
Recycling
Fire Exit
Utility
Secure Postmortem Room
Changing
W.C. W.C.
Changing
Stores
Rest Room
Disposal
Viewing Room
Fire Exit
W.C.
Meeting Room
Cleaning Stores
Radford's Office
Collapsable Wall
Appointment Room
The Dufferin House
FIRST FLOOR
Bedroom & Office
Stairs to 2nd Floor (not pictured)
Stairs to Basement
Den
Kitchen
Storage
Living Room
Body
Dining Room
Bath Room
BASEMENT
Storerooms
Ripped Vent & Collapsed Tunnel
Laundry
Steps to the Kitchen
Storeroom

Gone Missing

Doug Watts goes missing three days after the Dufferin murders, leaving behind a bloody living room couch, unless he has been put under tight security. The back door is unlocked. A **Spot Hidden** roll notes toilet water soaking the floor.

Elize Dufferin's body is stolen on the same night as Doug's, from wherever it is being kept. There is no sign of a break-in, though there is a trail of water leading to the employees' toilet. Security camera footage shows two people, in broad brimmed hats and long coats, pulling Elize's body out of a refrigerated drawer, stuffing her into a body bag, and exiting through the loading zone (which tripped an alarm). They escaped into a sewer. Inhuman, clawed hands are visible on the video with a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll, costing 0/1D4 **SAN** to see.

Return to Vale Funeral Home

There is not enough evidence for a search warrant of the funeral home, much less an arrest warrant. The investigators do have enough evidence to justify the overtime for a stakeout, however.

The lights at the funeral home remain on until shortly after 10pm, although none of the employees are seen leaving. If the investigators break in, the building appears deserted.

A successful **Spot Hidden** roll in Radford's filing cabinets reveals a separate folder with the six supposed victims listed, along with their contact information. There is no way to tell if this list was compiled before the investigators' visit. A Hard **Spot Hidden** focused on Radford's desk opens a false bottom in the largest drawer. Tucked inside is a well preserved copy of *Cultes des Goules*. This tome includes the *Consecrate Repository* spell.

At the back of a closet in the preparation room is a set of stairs leading down to a cellar. **Spot Hidden** notes air coming through the door's imperfect seal. The sound of faint voices wafts up from below.

NEW SPELL: CONSECRATE REPOSITORY

Cost: 5 POW; 1D6 Sanity points
Casting time: 1 hour

The caster takes a piece of paper with the target's name on it, that was once in the target's possession, and burns it in a ghoul skull. The caster then drinks a concoction consisting of the ashes mixed with powdered human bone fragments. The spell costs 5 POW, which the caster regains when the Repository dies.

The Repository's bones begin storing knowledge at the exact moment that knowledge would be lost in time (such as when the last copy of a book burns in a fire, or the last witness to an event dies). This causes 1D3 damage at random intervals over the coming months (at the Keeper's discretion, but no more than once per scenario). On a failed CON roll, 1 point of damage is permanent (cannot be healed with modern medicine).

The caster can pray to Mordiggian (using the Contact Mordiggian spell) to free a Repository from its duty (and return the 5 POW to the caster). Doing so is almost always fatal as the Repository receives all the secrets of everyone dying at that exact moment, suffering 6D6 damage. The Repository is also free when the caster dies, though the damage and etchings remain.

An Elder Sign will block the etchings, but not cure the condition.

Discovering that one's bones are marked for collection costs 1/1D6 SAN.

The Sepulcher

Fifteen feet below the preparation room is a twelve-foot square chamber made of white stone. A fetid breeze drifts out of a rough-hewn hole in the wall opposite the stairwell. Carved into the other walls are stone shelves.

In the center of the floor is a blood-stained drain. A trail of blood runs from Doug Watts' naked body to the drain. Elize Dufferin's dismembered corpse lies in the center of the room. Sitting on the floor against the walls are five funeral home employees. They each have one of Elize's limbs from which they are carefully peeling long strips of skin. Wendy Folds is also present. She is scalping the decapitated skull of Howard Dufferin.

Radford is present in her natural ghoulish state. Her clothes sit neatly folded on a nearby shelf. Along with Radford are two other ghouls plus one ghoul for every investigator (three investigators equals five ghouls). These are the other Collectors in Radford's clan. Radford and The Collectors gingerly gnaw the sinew from the victims' bones, licking clean the Pnathic script.

The entire tableau costs 1/1D10 **SAN**.

The shelves hold human bones, carefully de-fleshed and wrapped in human leather. Less than half the bones in each bundle are etched. The script translates to items of trivia similar to those on Elize's skeleton. A **Forensics** or **Medicine** roll indicates that these are the remains of three people and most of a fourth (Loreen Haskell, Tyler Daniels, Michael Bush, and Howard Dufferin).

Reaction

If the investigators fail a **Stealth** roll while descending the stairs, the ghouls and humans ambush them as they enter the Sepulcher.

If caught off guard and attacked, the ghouls and Folds defend the sacred chamber to the death, but the other humans will surrender when they have lost half or more of their hit points. Radford and the remaining ghouls gather up as many bones as they can and flee through the rough-hewn hole. They only stop to defend themselves if they have no choice.

The hole leads to a winding labyrinth of ghoul tunnels so narrow that they can only be crawled through. An investigator persistent enough to crawl for 50 feet or so is beset by ghouls and torn apart.

If the ghouls drive off the investigators, the ghouls and human servants will flee through the tunnels with the bones and, if given enough time, the corpses of the Repositories.

Blackmail

If the investigators recovered any of the etched bones, Radford calls the lead investigator by way of a disposable pay-as-you-go phone. She demands that they return the bones or they "will suffer greatly." She gives the investigator 24 hours to retrieve the bones and drop them on her grandfather's grave at a nearby cemetery.

If the investigators fail to comply, or try to set up an ambush, Radford casts *Consecrate Repository* on a random investigator (based on a **Luck** roll) using the business cards that they left with her. The investigator's first inkling is an ache in their bones and 1D3 damage. Radford will call them and give them one more chance. Continued failure to comply results in her casting *Contact Mordiggian*, freeing the investigator from being a Repository at the cost of 6D6 damage as his bones are suddenly etched with the knowledge of everyone then dying, all at once. Colleagues of a dead investigator suffer a 0/1D6 **SAN** loss upon learning the cause of death, and Radford moves on to another investigator….

If the investigators comply (which likely requires stealing the bones from a police evidence locker), Radford and her remaining Collectors appear, take the bones and swiftly depart. The investigators remain Repositories.

Rewards and Repercussions

Recovering the etched bones (which will likely involve killing Radford) results in a 1D8 **SAN** reward. Saving Doug Watts grants a 1D6 **SAN** reward. There is no reward if the Collectors escape with the bones.

HUMAN SERVANTS

STR 50 CON 55 SIZ 60 INT 60 POW 60
DEX 65 APP 50 EDU 70 SAN 0 HP 11

Damage bonus: none.
Build: 1
Move: 5

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10), damage 1D4+2+db

Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills: Art (Post Mortem Makeup) 40%, Credit Rating 10%, Cthulhu Mythos 10%, Drive Automobile 30%, First Aid 50%, Forensics 40%, Language (English) 70%, Law 30%, Listen 40%, Medicine 30%, Natural World 30%, Occult 25%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 40%.
Defenses: none.
Nationality: American
Age: varies.
Spells: none.
Indefinite Insanity: Ghoul-loving sycophants hoping for immortality.
Notes: The funeral home employees are third generation servants in their late 50s to late 60s. They will either become ghouls or gain immortality (of a sort) by being eaten by ghouls. Use these stats for Wendy Folds.

TYPICAL GHOUL

See the *Call of Cthulhu Keeper Rulebook*, p. 294. The typical ghoul has average stats.

ADELINE RADFORD, Head of the Collector Ghoul Clan

STR 90 CON 70 SIZ 70 INT 70 POW 45
DEX 65 HP 14

Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 9

ATTACKS

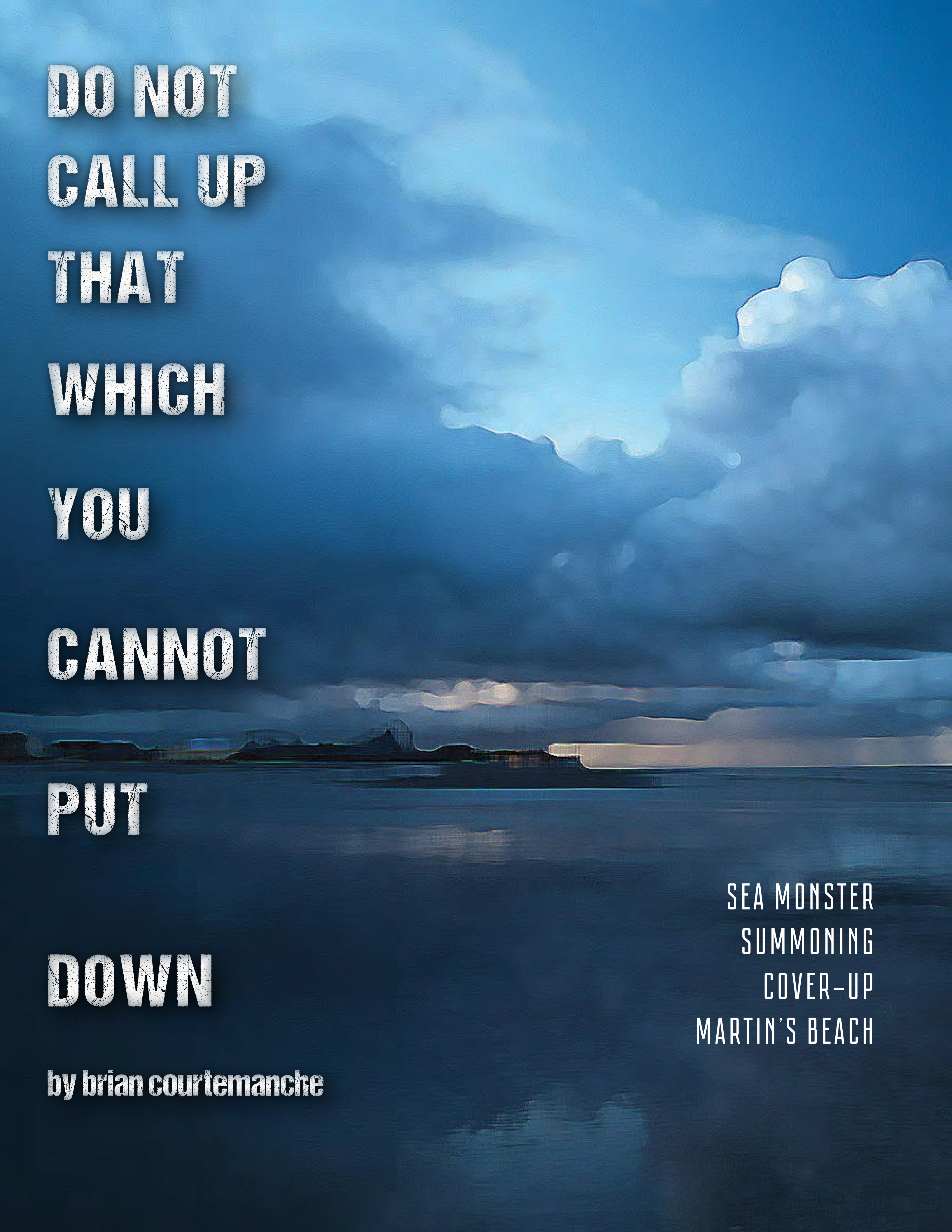
Attacks per Round: 3

Fighting (Brawl) 70% (35/14), damage 1D6+db (claws)

Bite and hold (mnvr): damage 1D4 per round

Dodge 60% (30/12)

Armor: Firearms and projectiles do half rolled damage (rounded down)
Skills: Climb 85%, Jump 85%, Listen 70%, Psychology 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 85%.
Spells: Consecrate Repository, Consume Likeness, Contact Mordiggian, Create Gate of Oneirology, Mental Suggestion
Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 to see her in ghoul form



DO NOT CALL UP THAT WHICH YOU CANNOT PUT DOWN

SEA MONSTER
SUMMONING
COVER-UP
MARTIN'S BEACH

by brian courtemanche

Introduction

It's great white shark tagging season off the Massachusetts coast. As the investigators go to sea in search of sharks, they learn that something even more fearsome than great whites is swimming in these waters. Called to assist stranded boaters, the investigators' altruism unwittingly places them at odds with the legendary Monster of Martin's Beach. Complicating matters is the fact that their guide, Dr. Erin Howie, has the deep one genetic taint, which is violently awakened when confronted by the Monster. To survive their outing at sea, the Investigators must either make a terrible sacrifice, or somehow defeat or outrun the enormous Monster.

Involving the Investigators

The investigators can be researchers, students, or volunteers looking for an educational adventure tagging sharks for a day, as part of a Massachusetts state fisheries project. They could also be documentary filmmakers or undercover pursuers of the weird looking into Mike Wall's rantings. As such, investigators can come from just about any background. Before heading out on the water, each investigator succeeding with a **Know** roll has heard scattered media reports that some of the big sharks in these waters have been found dead. So far, it's uncertain what is killing the sharks, whether disease, predators, or some heretofore unknown factor. Some reports speculate that a rogue great white is hunting others of its kind. Other reports speculate that an undocumented pod of orcas (uncommon but not unheard of in these waters) is behind the deaths.

Shark Week

The day begins on a fine summer morning at Salem's Pickering Wharf. Captain David Mascari and marine biologist Dr. Erin Howie welcome the investigators aboard the Wavedancer, Mascari's 24-foot research vessel. Dockside, introductions are made and basic safety procedures reviewed.

Dr. Howie doesn't realize that she carries the deep one taint deep in her genes. She has always felt a powerful attraction to the sea but assigns no preternatural motive for her feelings. Her physical features are only ever-so-slightly batrachian, but do not occasion especial notice by the uninitiated. Investigators with the **Cthulhu Mythos** skill can make a roll to suspect the taint, if they first pass an **Idea** roll. Even then, it's only a nagging suspicion, nothing overt.

As the investigators make ready to board, they are accosted by a disheveled-looking drunkard. "Don't go out there!" he shrieks. "We went out there, and it got us! The eye! The eye!" Investigators passing a **Psychology** roll determine that the man, while inebriated, is sincere. He's also indefinitely insane, thanks to a run-in with the Monster of Martin's Beach. If pressed for more information, the man says the "sea monster" attacked his fishing boat and he was the only survivor. Sobbing, the man staggers off down the wharf.

Those making a Hard **Know** roll or a successful **Library Use** roll (including with a smartphone) recall a fishing boat capsizing off of Cape Ann last month. All hands were lost, except for fisherman Mike Wall of Salem, rescued by the Coast Guard. When questioned, Wall said that they'd hooked a "sea monster," but that the thing was so big that it wrecked the boat, taking everyone with it except for Wall. Authorities immediately dismissed Wall's outlandish claim.

Similar Stories

Those with **Occult**, **History**, or **Library Use** skill can put their memories and smartphones to further good use, calling up similar accounts of "sea monsters" in the area.

- The earliest written account dates back to 1638. One John Josselyn tells of a "monstrous, ropy thing" coiled upon the rocks of Cape Ann. English sailors wanted to shoot the creature, but were warned off by Native American guides, who asserted that molesting the creature would be disastrous.

- Over the intervening centuries, there are sporadic, unverified reports of sea serpents in the waters off of Gloucester, Salem, Kingsport, and Beverly.

- An alleged sea monster was supposedly caught and killed by local fishermen of off nearby Martin's Beach in 1922. It was displayed for paying gawkers aboard a dilapidated barge for several weeks. A freak storm soon struck the coast, claiming numerous lives and dragging both barge and specimen out to sea. Neither barge nor specimen was ever recovered, becoming a curious footnote in Essex County folklore.

- In 1962, the Associated Press reported on two local fishing vessels that claimed to have spotted a monstrous serpentine thing, gulping up fish and paying the humans no mind.

Out to Sea

After the run-in with Wall, the investigators head out on the Wavedancer with Captain Mascari and Dr. Howie. Their purpose is to identify previously tagged great white sharks, and possibly tag ones heretofore unknown to the program. The Wavedancer slips past Beverly and Kingsport Head, moving out into deeper waters, the coastline soon just a thin strip of grey in the distance.

"Time to call up our friends," says Dr. Howie. She sets the investigators to slopping out copious amounts of frothy, red chum into the water and tossing tuna-laden bait crates overboard. An hour or two passes. Patrolling seagulls noisily discover the feast. Investigators making a **Spot Hidden** roll notice something large and dark break the surface of the water, perhaps 40 yards away, nudging one of the bait crates. If all fail the roll, Captain Mascari spots the activity. A massive dorsal fin penetrates the chum slick before disappearing again beneath the waves. "We've got a shark!" exclaims Dr. Howie, urging Captain Mascari to maneuver the boat closer to the animal.

The Coming Storm

As the Wavedancer nears the shark, the boat judders with a large 'thump!' rearing up several feet and plunging back down, dislodging incidentals. Those failing **DEX** rolls suffer a minor mishap: anything from sunglasses knocked overboard to a slip-and-fall for 1D2 points of damage on a failed **Luck** roll. Captain Mascari performs a quick inspection of the Wavedancer. "What the blazes was that?" cries Dr. Howie. Mascari asserts that there are no known rocks or reefs in the area. "Boat seems fine," he assures his passengers.

Onlookers can tell that something "isn't quite right" about the shark: it bobs oddly in the swells, bumping its nose into the bait crate. Passed **Spot Hidden** rolls discern a yellow identifier tag affixed at the base of the shark's dorsal fin. The shark rolls in the water, exposing a massive bite wound in its abdomen, most of its midsection torn away. The animal is quite dead.

Those aboard can haul the shark next to the Wavedancer with long-poled gaffs. They need to pull the identifier tag, take biological samples, examine wounds, and, if possible, determine what killed the shark. The tag identifies the shark as 'Albert,' an 18-foot male tagged two years ago off the coast of Wellfleet, Massachusetts. Successful Biology or Zoology rolls—or Dr. Howie by default—determine the following:

- The kill is quite fresh; 'Albert' has been dead less than fifteen minutes.
- The bite radius measures an astonishing 49 inches. Based on this measurement, the animal that killed Albert is probably 48 to 52 feet long, larger than the Wavedancer (this realization costs 0/1 **SAN**). Not even the biggest orca runs so large.

While taking samples from the dead shark, investigators passing **Listen** rolls hear an eerie, unearthly keening call, originating from somewhere underwater (0/1 **SAN** to hear). It's not a whale call, affirmed by passed **Zoology** or **Biology** rolls. The seagulls instantly fall silent and peel away, heading for distant land. Investigators passing **Psychology** rolls notice that Dr. Howie seems particularly transfixed by the eerie, mysterious sound. Her eyes bulge, she is flushed, sweating, and gasping. **Spot Hidden** rolls notice subcutaneous scars—dark, pulsing horizontal lines—now visibly running along the sides of Howie's neck.

If questioned, Dr. Howie seems confused, agitated, and in a mild fugue state. Her deep one heritage has been suddenly awakened by the near proximity of the Martin's Beach Monster, to which the deep ones have sacrificed for eons.

Moments later, the Wavedancer's radio crackles to life: it's a distress call from another boat, the Coyote out of Danversport. The Coyote's outboard motor has quit, stranding the small crew of two: one adult, one child. They're approximately two miles from the Wavedancer, making the investigators' boat the closest able craft. Captain Mascari confirms the coordinates, pointing the Wavedancer in that direction while Albert's carcass is released.

Investigators making a **Luck** roll, or who simply make a point of watching what happens, glance back at the shark's floating remains. The entire huge carcass suddenly vanishes beneath the waves, snatched in a single grab from below. All trace of Albert is gone (0/1 **SAN** to witness).

The Coyote

A couple of miles later, the two boats rendezvous, aided by the shouts and arm-waving of the Coyote's pilot, Bill Vogel, out for an afternoon of fishing with his grandson, Peter (age 7). As the Wavedancer draws near, it's apparent that something extraordinary has happened. Tied to the side of the Coyote is an elongated, scaly, serpentine creature, perhaps thirty feet long. Huge, but not huge enough to have done the damage observed on Albert the shark.

Near the thing's gill slits sprout two tiny forelegs, while its head features a huge mouth brimming with teeth nearly the size of a man's hand. Most astonishingly, the creature has a single, cyclopean eye set in the center of its head. A large tuna-fishing hook pokes from the thing's maw, while its body is riddled with gunshots (Bill Vogel keeps a .30-06 bolt-action rifle on board, though this is the first time he's ever fired it at sea). Old Bill explains that after they'd hooked the thing, it began attacking their small boat, "as if it was smart or something." Fearing for their safety, Bill emptied his rifle into the creature. Passed **Psychology** rolls indicate that old Bill is telling the truth and is in minor shock.

Even mortally wounded and bleeding out, the thing thrashes sluggishly, mewing piteously, the same eerie call heard earlier. Seeing this aberration costs observers 0/1D4 **SAN**. Little Peter jabbers excitedly about how he and his grandpa have caught "a real live sea monster!" Investigators making a **Spot Hidden** roll notice several large, dark shapes circling the Coyote beneath the waves—hungry sharks come to investigate.

At the sight of the mortally wounded creature, Dr. Howie loses her presently-tenuous grasp on sanity, her deep one heritage surging forward. The scientist creates a spectacle, gesticulating over the gunwale in an attitude of prayer and supplication, gasping a wordless, atonal chant out over the waters. Dr. Howie's eyes seem more saucer-like than ever, her neck-scars are positively throbbing, and even her skin seems greyish and sickly. Those passing **Medicine** rolls have never seen anything like it (0/1 **SAN**).

Another alien cry—this one much more powerful than previous emanations—erupts from underwater into the air, as if in answer to Dr. Howie's strange song (0/1D2 **SAN** to hear). The circling sharks break and swim rapidly away from the boats (a successful **Natural History** roll determines this to be very odd behavior for the animals).

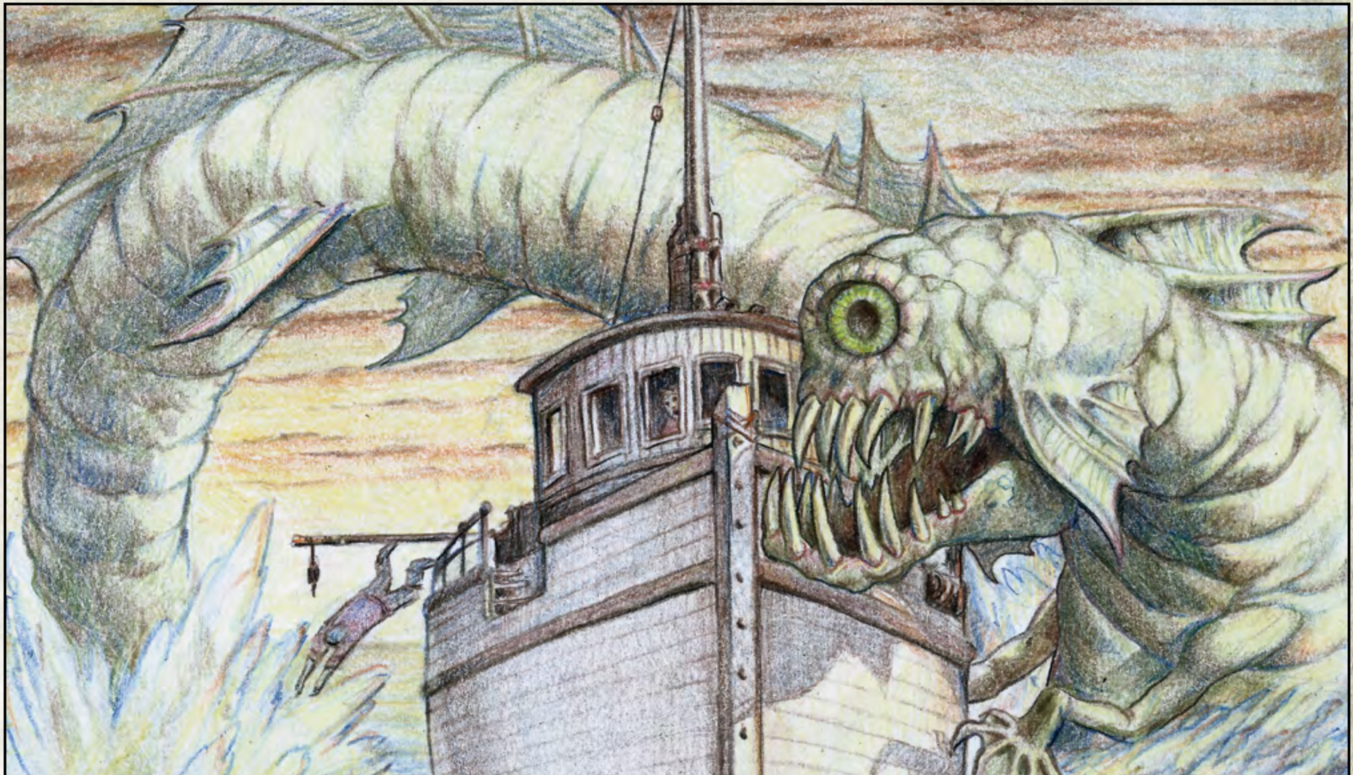
From below, something smashes the Coyote into the Wavedancer. Investigators failing a **DEX** roll are knocked prone, also suffering 1D2 points of damage on a failed **Luck** roll. Grandfather and grandson recover themselves, scrambling aboard the investigators' boat as the Coyote—sea serpent and all—is dragged beneath the waves. The Wavedancer pitches and spins in the sudden displacement of water. Amid the chaos, a Hard **Spot Hidden** roll discerns an impossibly large set of jaws disappearing into the dark depths, dragging down the Coyote and the thing lashed to its side (1/1D4 **SAN** to see).

Another monstrous call breaks the surface, this one unmistakably filled with rage. Captain Mascari frantically struggles to point the Wavedancer landward. Dr. Howie, in the full throes of atavistic mania, screeches to the waves from the deck. A gargantuan sea serpent, a larger, older version of the infant specimen, surfaces a few dozen yards in front of the Wavedancer, cutting the boat off from shore. It glares at those aboard with a single eye the size of a ship's wheel, seething with furious intelligence. Beholding the colossal creature, being the object of its malice, costs those aboard 1D4/1D12 **SAN**.

The monstrous serpent circles the boat, its alien intelligence probing the minds of all aboard. Those making a successful **POW** roll realize that an intelligence not their own sifts through their thoughts, costing 1/1D4 **SAN**. Resisting the mental search requires a successful opposed **POW** roll.

Those making the better of a **POW** or **INT** roll wordlessly discern the blood price the creature demands for the loss of its kin: the two directly responsible, Bill Vogel and his young grandson, must be thrown alive into the sea. Everyone aboard soon comes to know the price to be paid, including old Bill and his grandson. The boy begins crying, while Bill will protect his grandson with his life. The creature's will is implacable, placing those aboard the Wavedancer in a terrible moral quandary. Engaging the sea serpent in direct combat is likely suicidal.

Dr. Howie, her deep one sensibilities fully dominant, moves swiftly to enact the creature's will, unless restrained or incapacitated. Cruel Keepers may have the sea serpent aid its newfound thrall, by using its paralyzing powers on sacrificial victims or those who would oppose Dr. Howie's actions. If Bill Vogel and his grandson are tossed overboard,



the investigators are treated to the sight of the pair being eaten alive, slowly and with relish (**SAN** loss 1/1D6). The sacrifice accepted, the Monster sinks beneath the waves, its one giant eye still glaring at the Wavedancer as it disappears into the dark depths.

If Dr. Howie is tossed overboard, the scientist swims downward into the depths, a sight costing 0/1D2 **SAN**. Her fate is left to the Keeper. If any investigators are knocked overboard during a melee, the creature forbears immediately attacking them (preferring the offending pair of grandfather and grandson), though the Keeper can play up the terror of being in the water with the thing. If the Vogels remain aboard the Wavedancer, the Monster attempts to sink the boat, eating the transgressors.

Attempting to Outrun the Monster

The good news is that the Wavedancer is faster than the creature, under perfect conditions. The Monster has a base MOV of 9 while the Wavedancer has a base MOV of 12. The Keeper should familiarize himself with the chase rules in the *Call of Cthulhu Keeper Rulebook*, particularly the example at page 150, as whoever is at the helm will be opposing his **Pilot (Boat)** skill against the **Fighting (Smash Boat)** skill of the Monster in an attempt to escape. The Monster starts out right in front of the Wavedancer, between it and the shore.

The Wavedancer has 5 Build points. Each successful attack by the Monster inflicts 18D6 hit points of damage to the boat. For every 10 full hit points of damage the Wavedancer receives, its Build is reduced by one point. If reduced to 2 Build points, the boat's speed is halved, and the creature can easily keep up going forward.

The Monster, being intelligent, will not chase humans all the way into the harbor. If the Wavedancer is wrecked, call for **Luck** rolls: an Extreme success means that an investigator is later found by the Coast Guard or other watercraft, deliriously clinging to a piece of floating debris, but in one piece. On failed **Luck** rolls, the investigators likely become a meal or drown. Intermediate results have intermediate consequences as determined by the Keeper. Remember that there are sharks in the area.

Rewards and Repercussions

Should the Wavedancer make it back to port, surviving investigators have quite a fish story to tell...or terrible secrets to guard, depending on circumstances. Once free of the sea serpent's presence, and if still present, Dr. Erin Howie's humanity reasserts itself. However, the scientist has a devastating new self-awareness to confront (as well as potential criminal charges). Wild tales of sea serpents are greeted with ridicule. Any media taken of the Martin's Beach Monsters will be roundly debunked as fakery. There are no such things as sea serpents, after all.

Escaping the Martin's Beach Monster with no loss of human life nets each investigator 1D10 **Sanity** points. No Sanity points are gained if anyone has been lost (or sacrificed) at sea.

THE MARTIN'S BEACH MONSTER

STR 630	CON 250	SIZ 880	INT 50	POW 100
DEX 50				HP 113

Damage bonus: +18D6
Build: 19
Move: 9 (swim)

ATTACKS

Engulf 60% (30/12), automatically swallows victim

Smash Boat 25% (12/5), damage 18D6

Paralyzing Presence (mnvr): The Monster can expend 3 magic points, matching its **POW** vs. the **POW** of the intended victim. If successful, the victim is paralyzed. The Monster must be within 30 yards of the victim to be effective. Multiple opponents may be simultaneously attacked with this power.

SAN Loss: 1D4/1D12

DR. ERIN HOWIE, Marine Biologist of Troubling Ancestry

STR 50	CON 60	SIZ 45	INT 75	POW 50
DEX 60	APP 50	EDU 65	SAN 65	HP 10

Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 9

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 30% (15/6), damage 1D3+db

Skills: Marine Biology 80%, Marine Engineering 50%, Natural World 60%, Pilot (Boat) 50%, Science (Oceanography) 70%, Spot Hidden 60%.

Age: 28

Spells: none.

DAVID MASCARI, Captain of the Wavedancer

STR 80	CON 75	SIZ 70	INT 55	POW 50
DEX 65	APP 6	EDU 65	SAN 70	HP 14

Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 30% (15/6), damage 1D3+db

Knife 30% (15/6), damage 1D4+2+db

Skills: First Aid 50%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Navigate 60%, Pilot (Boat) 70%, Spot Hidden 60%, Swim 80%.
Age: 25
Spells: none.

BILL VOGEL, Sympathetic Grandfather

STR 60	CON 70	SIZ 60	INT 50	POW 40
DEX 55	APP 60	EDU 65	SAN 50	HP 13

Damage Bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 4

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 30% (15/6), damage 1D3+db

.30-06 Bolt-Action Rifle 35%, damage 2D6+4 (left on board the Coyote)

Skills: Fishing 70%, Pilot (Boat) 45%.
Age: 72
Spells: none.

PETER VOGEL, Bill's Grandson

STR 20	CON 50	SIZ 30	INT 60	POW 50
DEX 45	APP 60	EDU 10	SAN 65	HP 8

Damage bonus: -2
Build: -2
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 25% (12/5), damage 1D3+db

Skills: None of appreciable value.
Age: 7
Spells: none.

MIKE WALL, Drunk and Fearful Fisherman

STR 75	CON 45	SIZ 70	INT 50	POW 70
DEX 55	APP 40	EDU 40	SAN 23	HP 11

Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 45% (22/8), damage 1D3+db

Skills: Accost Strangers 80%, Fishing 70%, Get Drunk 80%, Pilot (Boat) 50%.
Age: 34
Spells: none.

HIT AND RUN

by tyler hudak

CHILD DEATH
REVENGE
RACE AGAINST TIME
SORCERY

Introduction

Jebediah Gareth was a church-going man until his family was killed in a car accident, the sole survivor being his 10-year-old grandson, William. After this tragedy, Jebediah became overprotective and reclusive, keeping himself and William at his cabin on the outskirts of a small town, Millersburg. When William is then tragically killed in a hit and run accident, Jebediah goes insane and uses black magic to summon the "Manifestation of the Retribution," a creature that acts out his thirst for revenge.

After the accident, the investigators are contacted by the other driver—meth dealer Johnny Williams, along with his girlfriend Lindsay Taylor. Johnny is being stalked by the old man and is convinced that they will all be killed for what happened to the boy. The investigators must find Jebediah, learn what he has done, and determine how to defeat the creature, all while being hunted themselves.

Unbeknownst to all, Lindsay was guilt-stricken by what happened and has already found Jebediah. She agreed to give Jebediah a sample of Johnny's hair and some of her blood. He used these in his ritual to summon the Manifestation to exact retribution against all involved. Now, on a nightly basis, Lindsay transforms into the creature and is driven to kill Johnny and the investigators.

Involving the Investigators

This scenario can start any time that the investigators are driving together. Reasons for this could include driving somewhere as part of another investigation or getting lost while on a trip. Alternatively, the investigators could be hired by Johnny to track down Jebediah, as he fears for his life.

Hit and Run

If they are involved in the accident, then the investigators are driving on a back road, in a heavily wooded area, near the small town of Millersburg. Coming down the opposite lane is a car driven by Johnny, with Lindsay riding shotgun. Without warning, 10-year-old William darts out into the road, but stops suddenly in the investigators' lane because a car in the oncoming lane is driving at a very high rate of speed, too fast for him to run in front of it. This requires a **Drive Auto** check from the driver of the investigators' vehicle. A success means that they swerve, causing Johnny's car to veer and hit the boy; a failure means that the investigators' vehicle strikes the boy. The investigators lose 1/1D4 **SAN**; the driver should make a **SAN** check for a loss of 2/1D4+1 if they hit William.

Checking on the boy finds that he is close to death; **First Aid** or **Medicine** rolls do nothing. Seconds later, an old man, Jebediah, runs out of the woods, crying in agony. Johnny and Lindsay momentarily stop, stare in shock, mouths agape, but soon regain their composure and speed off. A **Spot Hidden**, or a deliberate and prompt effort, successfully gets their license plate number.

If the investigators call 911, the police and paramedics arrive to take William and Jebediah away. The police will question the investigators. If the license plate of the other car is given, they may overhear a report that it was recently reported stolen. They can also overhear a second report while their statements are taken that the boy has died on the way to the hospital.

Charges

An investigation will occur into the accident. It will be clear to the authorities that this was an accident and the investigators will not be charged, even if they hit William. If the investigators sped off before the authorities showed up, they are unlikely to be caught unless they turn themselves in.

The Phone Call

Sometime after the accident, an investigator receives a phone call from a desperate sounding man. He introduces himself as Johnny, the "other guy from the car accident." Johnny says they have to meet, as all of their lives are in danger. If pressed, he'll say that he's been being stalked by the "old man" and that his car had already been ripped apart. He tells the investigator to meet him in room 6 at the Dual Pool Motel near Millersburg at 10pm that night, and not to involve the police. If they do not go, the investigators will encounter the creature and will then receive another call from Johnny.

Dual Pool Motel

The motel is located on a solitary stretch of highway about 20 miles from Millersburg. It is a run-down, one-story motel with only one car in the parking lot. The office of the motel contains a lonely, 40-year-old woman named Bonnie. With a successful **Persuade** or sufficient bribe, Bonnie will allow the investigators to examine the hotel register. The only guest is "Roger Smith" in room 6.

The curtains on room 6 are drawn, although the investigators can see a shadow pacing back and forth. Johnny will only let them in only when he has confirmed they are alone.

The room is disgusting and dirty—what the investigators would expect of a motel that rents by the hour. Lindsay is sitting at a corner table, while Johnny ushers them in and locks the door behind them. Both look exhausted and it is obvious Johnny is strung out on something. A successful **Spot Hidden** sees a poor attempt to hide a black eye on Lindsay. A second successful **Spot Hidden** sees the outline of a .32 revolver tucked into Johnny's belt.

Pacing the entire time, Johnny says that after the accident, he and Lindsay switched cars and laid low at the motel. After a few days, he started to see someone watching him out of the corner of his eye but they would disappear once he looked. Three days ago, he was coming out of a grocery store and saw the "old man" from the accident scene staring at him from across the street. He disappeared before Johnny could confront him. The next day, the hood of Johnny's car was ripped off, and the engine block torn to shreds.

Johnny is convinced that the old man is behind this and wants the investigators to find him. He's been having nightmares where he dreams of a shadowy creature with glowing red eyes killing them all, the word "retribution" echoing in his mind the entire time. If the investigators find the old man, Johnny "will take care of the rest." A successful **Psychology** roll reveals that Johnny is absolutely serious in his implied death threat.

Other questions the investigators may ask are listed below:

- Why did he leave the accident? He and Lindsay transport "things" for some friends in the city. Some of the things were in the car and he couldn't take the chance of getting caught.

- How did he find them? He was able to figure out who they were from public police reports and found one of their phone numbers through some Internet searches.

Lindsay is quiet the whole time. If asked any questions, she'll start to speak but is interrupted by Johnny who will say she doesn't know anything and she needs to "just shut up." Johnny doesn't know who the old man is, although if Lindsay is separated from Johnny, she gives up Jebediah's name on a Hard **Persuade**, **Fast Talk** or **Intimidate** roll (although she will not reveal anything else).

When one of the investigators looks out the window, or when they leave, Jebediah will be standing across the street, staring directly at them. Before they can do anything, a car passes in front of Jebediah and he disappears (**SAN** loss 0/1).

If the investigators agree to find Jebediah, Johnny asks them to call him on his cell phone once they find him. If they refuse to help, they will encounter the creature later that night and will receive a call from Johnny the next day, saying that Lindsay was taken by something the night before.

Involving the Police

Allow the investigators to involve the police if they wish. If the police go to the motel, they will find the room in shambles, indicating that some type of struggle had taken place, and Johnny and Lindsay are nowhere to be found. If the investigators try to use the police to protect them, the creature will attack while they are in the police station, killing many before it is driven off or killed itself (only to come back later in Johnny's body).

Finding Jebediah

The investigators can contact the police, the hospital, or snoop around the town of Millersburg to find Jebediah.

Police

The police are very reluctant to give out any information regarding an open investigation. A Hard **Persuade**, **Law**, or **Credit Rating** roll will convince an officer to reveal Jebediah's name. They have not pursued the investigation further, since all leads have gone dead.

Hospital

Due to privacy laws, the investigators initially get no information from the hospital. However, a successful **Persuade** roll on one of the nurses discloses Jebediah's name and that he disappeared shortly after the ambulance arrived. A Hard success also finds out that William's body is missing. (Jebediah used a Gate spell to retrieve William's body from the morgue and bury it at the cabin.) Using this information against the hospital is met with lawyers and threats unless the investigators drop their line of questioning.

The Town of Millersburg

Millersburg is a small town about 5 miles from the accident. The town consists of a number of small houses, a gas station, and the local Methodist church. The gas station attendant will not know Jebediah personally, but remembers he went to church regularly. He doesn't live in town, but somewhere in the area, he thinks.

At the church, the investigators meet Pastor Donald Halosty, a tall, thin man in his late thirties. Donald is happy to talk to the investigators and knows Jebediah. He says that Jebediah was a good, church-going man until his family was killed in a car accident. Since then, he has become reclusive, living outside of town in a cabin with his grandson, William. With a successful **Persuade** roll, Donald also recounts how a church genealogy project found that Jebediah's family had been accused of witchcraft in the early 1800s. Donald will be reluctant to give directions to Jebediah's house without another **Persuade** or **Fast Talk** roll, or a contribution to the new sanctuary fund.

Jebediah's Cabin

The cabin is a few miles outside of Millersburg and accessible only by a half mile long dirt road. Jebediah lives completely off the grid so directory searches do little good. If the investigators have his name, however, it is a simple matter to search the county recorder's records for property owned by Jebediah Gareth. The cabin property is in the name of his late wife, Alice, but there are few Gareths living in the area and it only takes a few hours of trial and error to find the cabin, which is about two miles from the accident scene.

The cabin is small, run-down, and surrounded by woods. The curtains are pulled on the windows, although Jebediah can be seen sitting in a rocking chair, staring at the front door. He will not answer the door, although it is unlocked.

Leading away from the house is a small path that enters a clearing. In the center is a freshly dug grave, next to which are the remains of a fire. A **Spot Hidden** roll finds a comb with bits of burnt hair near the edge of the fire (**SAN** loss 0/1). This is where Jebediah cast the ritual.

Jebediah is initially silent when approached, but can eventually be provoked into letting the following comments slip to the investigators:

- I remember you from my boy's death.
- I have not left my house, but I have been watching you.
- I did what I had to do to punish the wicked.
- The harlot came to me seeking redemption, and helped me start the retribution.
- That which has been started cannot be put down until it is complete.

After a time, he will start rocking in his chair, increasing in speed, and says that he is sorry for what he has called up and that God will place judgement on him. With that, as the investigators are leaving, he pulls out a pistol and shoots himself in the head (**SAN** loss 1/1D4).

The cabin is small, containing only a bedroom, kitchen, and living area. In a fireplace in the living room are the remains of a burned book, upon which occult symbols are barely recognizable. This was the family spell book which contained the Gate spell Jebediah used; in his madness, he burned it.

Next to Jebediah is the family bible bookmarked at Isaiah 35:4. A family tree is in the front, dating back to the 1700s. In between the lines of the passage from Isaiah, written in archaic English, is the ritual "Retribution of the Wicked." On the wall of the bedroom are the glyphs that Jebediah used to Gate into the hospital to get William's body. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll will identify the symbols.

Encountering the Manifestation

Every night that the investigators have not defeated the creature, one or all of them will have an encounter with it. The following are example encounters.

- Asleep in his house, an investigator makes a **Listen** roll. If successful, he is woken by a loud roar from the outside (**SAN** loss 0/1) and the rending of metal. They will find their car ripped apart, with deep gouges alongside and a large, clawed footprint nearby (**SAN** loss 0/1).
- The investigator hears a noise from outside a window. Two glowing red eyes, surrounded by a smoky outline of a creature, are seen staring back (**SAN** loss 1/1D3). The creature launches into the window at them, chasing them down and attacking.
- Driving at night, the investigators' car is hit from the side and knocked into a tree on the side of the road. All in the car should make **Luck** rolls; failure means they take 1D4 damage. A roar can be heard outside, as they see two red eyes quickly approaching them (**SAN** loss 1/1D3), bent on attacking.

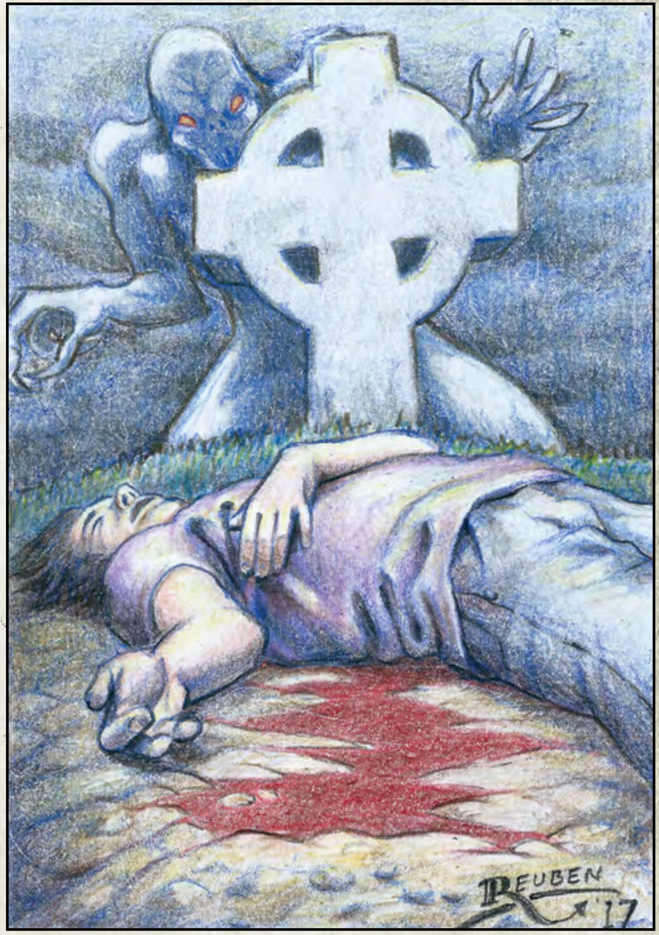
End Game

The Manifestation will continue to hunt the investigators until they are all dead, or it is.

There are only two ways for the investigators to defeat the creature. The first is to kill all who can transform into it—in this case Lindsay and Johnny.

The investigators may also defeat the creature by killing Johnny over the grave of William. He must die in order for the creature to be stopped. However, every round that Johnny is still alive but bleeding onto the grave negates the creature's armor. As soon as Johnny's blood is shed onto the grave, the creature will appear from nowhere and attack. (Lindsay will, coincidentally, vanish from wherever she last was.)

Johnny is easy enough to lure out to the cabin; he comes running (armed with his revolver) if the investigators call



him as requested with a location for the "old man." He orders Lindsay to stay in the car. She disregards this instruction, which leads quickly to a fight to the death either at the cabin or (if the investigators planned well) at the gravesite. Do not brush aside the legal and moral consequences of the investigators arranging the deaths of Johnny and Lindsay.

RETRIBUTION OF THE WICKED

Cost: 2 MPs per person targeted; 1D20 SAN
Casting Time: 1 hour
The purpose of this spell is to wreak vengeance upon those who have wronged the caster. The caster must have knowledge of all targets, as well as bodily material (hair, blood, etc.) of any who will be transformed. Once the costs are paid, the caster must make a POW roll. If successful, the Manifestation of the Retribution, an avatar of the grief and rage of the caster, is summoned. It will take over the body of one of the people whose bodily material was used. Each night, the creature will transform the possessed and hunt down those targeted by the spell. It will continue to do so until each target is killed, all of the people who can be transformed are killed, or "the most wicked has their blood spilled over the wronged." Killing the creature also kills the possessed person.

Lindsay is currently transforming every night. If she is killed, Johnny will transform into the creature within 1D4 rounds, unless he is already dead.

Rewards and Repercussions

Stopping the creature results in a reward of 1D4 **SAN**. Killing Lindsay or Johnny in cold blood cost 1D3 **SAN** for each of them.

JOHNNY WILLIAMS

STR 45 CON 55 SIZ 45 INT 55 POW 45
DEX 60 APP 40 EDU 35 SAN 20 HP 9
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 45% (22/9), damage 1D3+db

Firearms (.32 revolver) 50% (25/10). damage 1D8

Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills: Charm 20%, Cook Meth 70%, Credit Rating 25%, Fast Talk 55%, Intimidate 60%, Listen 45%, Persuade 35%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 40%.
Defenses: None above base.
Nationality: American
Age: 32
Education: High school dropout
Spells: none.
Notes: Johnny will put on a tough guy front but he is really a coward, concerned only with saving his hide. He often takes his anger out on his girlfriend, Lindsay.

LINDSAY TAYLOR

STR 40 CON 40 SIZ 40 INT 60 POW 60
DEX 50 APP 60 EDU 50 SAN 20 HP 8
Damage bonus: -1
Build: -1
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 25% (12/5), damage 1D3+db

Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills: Charm 40%, Credit Rating 25%, Fast Talk 55%, Listen 55%, Persuade 40%, Spot Hidden 40%.
Defenses: None above base.
Nationality: American
Age: 26
Education: High school dropout
Spells: none.
Notes: Lindsay is the girlfriend of meth-head Johnny Williams. After the car accident, Lindsay was racked by guilt and sought out Jebediah. She brought him the bodily material that he needed in order to cast *Retribution of the Wicked.*

A MANIFESTATION OF THE RETRIBUTION

STR 100 CON 120 SIZ 100 INT 75 POW 50
DEX 105 HP 22
Damage bonus: +1D6
Build: 2
Move: 9

ATTACKS

Fighting (Claw) 80% (40/16), damage 1D6+db

Grab 80% (40/16): The Manifestation has a tentacle that whips out up to 10 feet away and attempts to entangle a victim. If successful, the victim will take 1D4 damage, and will be pulled toward the creature at 5 feet/round. If the victim is grabbed around the neck, they will begin to suffocate. The Manifestation may perform both claw and grab attacks per round, but may only have one victim grabbed at a time.

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Listen 100%, Spot Hidden 100%.
Defenses: 3-point armor
Spells: 1-2 as desired by the Keeper
SAN Loss: 1/1D10

The Manifestation of the Retribution is the physical manifestation of the grief and rage of the caster of the spell Retribution of the Wicked. It appears as a large creature, cloaked in shadow, with glowing red eyes. Per the spell, the Manifestation can take over any of the targets whose bodily material was consumed in the casting. If that person is killed, the Manifestation will take over the next target within 1D4 rounds.

The Manifestation will be fully dismissed once all named in the spell are killed, all of the targets that it can transform into are killed, or the "blood of the most wicked is spilled over the wronged."

REMAKING THE HATTERAS REEF

by andi newton

HATTERAS REEF
UNDERWATER
MUTATIONS
INVESTIGATION

Introduction

THE FORT HATTERAS BEACH IS ALWAYS BUSY, ESPECIALLY IN THE SUMMER. SUNBATHERS LAY ON OVERSIZED TOWELS, SOAKING UP THE RAYS, WHILE KIDS AND PARENTS BUILD SANDCASTLES OR FLY KITES. COUPLES WALK HAND-IN-HAND DOWN THE BEACH. SWIMMERS BODY SURF ON THE WAVES OR RIDE THEM ON BOOGIE BOARDS. IN THE DISTANCE, CONTAINER SHIPS CROSS THE HORIZON, HEADING TO OR FROM THE LARGER DOCKS IN WILMINGTON. SMALLER FISHING BOATS DART IN AND OUT BETWEEN THEM. THEY ONLY HAVE TO GO TO THE FISHERY AT THE NORTH END OF THE ISLAND TO OFFLOAD THEIR CARGO: TUNA, MOSTLY, BUT SEA BASS AND GROUPER AS WELL.

Fishermen also line the pier that extends out from the public beach, some manning four or five poles. They go to one of the built-in cleaning stations when they've got a full catch. Swimmers avoid the area around the pier. Getting too close is a good way to wind up with a hook in your leg—or have a run-in with one of the smaller tiger sharks that feed on the chum in the water around the pylons.

This morning, there's more activity than normal at the pier. Some of the line fishers have reported catching strange fish: Trout with long, thick, knobby fins; bluefish with oversized heads and no eyes. Inspectors from the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission are at both the fishing pier and the commercial fishery, checking everyone's catch for more deformed fish. An old ship was scuttled off the coast a while back to rebuild the reef, which has been hit hard by an increase in commercial fishing boats. The inspectors are concerned that contaminants from the scuttled ship are causing the mutations.

Keeper's Background

Solomon Lestari was a crewman on the Christiana, a commercial transport boat that ran between eastern U.S. ports and those in Asia. About fifteen years ago, a deckhand named Bill Kane picked up an unusual lute at an open-air market in Borneo. Solomon's grandfather had immigrated to the U.S. from Borneo, and he recognized the lute as a sapeh, a musical instrument used by the Iban Dayak of Sarawak. Solomon was impressed by the condition of the sapeh. Even the strings were intact and the decorative schist and antimony inlays worked into the wood were unlike anything he'd ever seen.

Kane was a decent guitarist and on the trip back to the States, he sat in the galley playing the sapeh. As the days went on, though, Solomon and the other men started to notice changes in Kane. He'd always been easygoing, but now he turned angry and cruel, lashing out at the other men for no reason. The more he played the sapeh, the worse he got—and the worse he got, the more he played, until that was all he was doing. Even the captain threatening to fire him couldn't get him to stop.

One night, Kane snapped and stabbed one of the other crewmen. It took Solomon and three other sailors to pull Kane off the man. When they did, they discovered the physical changes that Kane had been hiding: Elongated fingers with extra joints; pulsating nodules on his arms and chest that erupted into tentacles that lashed out, then sucked back into his flesh again; a double set of teeth, pointed and serrated like a shark's.

They locked Kane in the captain's cabin, hoping that if they destroyed the sapeh, he would return to normal. But nothing they tried even scratched the instrument's surface. The crew eventually decided to seal the sapeh in the ship's hull, hoping the thick steel would be enough to lessen the cursed instrument's influence. They used a welding torch to cut out a section of the inner wall in the cargo hold big enough to fit the sapeh, then dropped the instrument in and resealed the hull.

Unfortunately, Kane didn't recover and within days he was dead. They gave him a burial at sea, then they brought the ship to port, unloaded it, and the captain stashed the Christiana at a local dry-dock. The ship's crew drifted apart, and Solomon moved back to Hatteras, where he got a job at the cannery.

A year ago, the Christiana's captain passed away. With no one to pay the dockage fees, the dry dock's owner sold the ship to the OBX Restoration Group. Solomon begged OBX-RG not to scuttle the Christiana. He even tried to talk the dry dock's owner out of selling it. But everyone wrote him off as a lunatic. He lost his job at the cannery and spent his days trying to stop the reef project—and watching for the horror that he knew would come.

Solomon believes that the only way to stop the sapeh's influence is to seal it away again, either back in the ship's hull or somewhere on shore. That kept it from affecting anyone for fifteen years and he's sure that it will do so again.

Involving the Investigators

The investigators can be from any of the groups on the beach, at the fishing pier, or at the canneries. At least one of them should be an experienced diver with some motivation to prevent a disaster. They could also be locals from town. Examples might include:

- Fish and Wildlife inspectors
- Fishermen
- Cannery workers
- Police officers
- Tourists at the beach
- Boat owners at the docks
- Marine biologists at the North Carolina Aquarium
- News crew members covering the reports of mutated fish

The Attacks Begin

The investigators should be allowed to see the following event. An ambulance races onto the Hatteras docks. Dock workers order the owners of boats at the nearest dock to move their vessels, then begin clearing the area around the docks of pedestrians. Shortly thereafter, a boat pulls into the dock. The crew barely has the boat secured before the EMTs jump on board. As they load a man on their stretcher and take him to the ambulance, Solomon Lestari pushes his way through the crowd and starts screaming that he warned them this would happen. When Solomon spots Jenny Dugan, the head of OBX-RG, climbing off the boat, he pushes through the barrier and runs up to her. Solomon asks if she believes him now and tells her that this is her fault, and that it's only going to get worse. Finally, police restrain Solomon, handcuff him, and put him into the back of a police cruiser.

A reporter from the local paper asks Jenny about what happened. She says that it was a "diving accident." When the reporter presses, Dugan snaps that a good friend of hers almost died and she wants to get to the hospital to be with him. Then she gets into an SUV with the rest of her crew and drives away.

The Hospital and the Coroner

These witnesses are cooperative with anyone having any seemingly legitimate reason to inquire. Doctors at the local hospital can confirm (since he is looking for attention and eager to make what happened to him public) that a man named Siraj Vassen suffered an attack, probably by a shark, while diving out by the reef. Vassen was wearing a shark suit and checking on the condition of the reef for OBX-RG. He suffered severe bite wounds to his torso and extremities and will likely lose one of his arms, even with a shark suit. Investigators will need to wait until Vassen has recovered from surgery to try and speak with him, at which point he can describe the strangeness of the reef and the mutated fish that attacked him. Vassen will insist that whatever it was, it was not a shark.

Later, when dead bodies start washing up on the beach, the investigators can speak to the coroner, Lucas Haler, who might be convinced to let them attend an autopsy. Despite what the doctors at the hospital said, Haler is convinced that what attacked these people wasn't a shark. The bite wounds are too small, and some of them have lacerations as if they were cut with a knife. Others have crush wounds and marks like suckers from an octopus' tentacle.

OBX Restoration Group

OBX-RG is also cooperative with anyone having a legitimate reason to ask about its activities, although defensive and insistent that it did nothing wrong. The OBX Restoration Group works with the Coast Guard and North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission to restore beaches, reefs, and other wildlife areas in the Outer Banks region of North Carolina. One of their most recent projects was to scuttle a derelict ship along the Hatteras Reef, to help rebuild it after damage done by commercial fishing vessels. They bought the Christiana from a dry dock that had recently changed ownership. Members of OBX-RG thoroughly cleaned the ship of all chemicals, then cut holes throughout the ship's hull so that fish and other marine life could pass through it and coral could access and grow on all surfaces of the ship. Finally, the Christiana was scuttled at a site chosen with help from the North Carolina Aquarium and the Coast Guard.

OBX-RG has been monitoring the site since then, with divers going out on a weekly basis to take samples and record video of the reef's progress. At first, everything looked fine. Then, they noticed some unusual changes to the structure of the coral. Because of that, they increased their dives to every day. Although their samples showed no sign of contamination from the ship, the changes in the coral increased, and even the fish around the reef started showing mutations. However, the attack on Vassen was the first such incident.

If the investigators have someone with expertise in engineering or marine biology, Jenny Dugan will let them go over the project's records from the ship cleaning and their monitoring of the scuttling site, again motivated by a desire for good public relations. They have nothing to hide and sincerely want to get to the bottom of whatever is causing the fish to mutate.

Although OBX-RG still wants to monitor the site, for the safety of their people, they will only be using remote dive cameras for the time being. The shark suit that their diver was wearing didn't stop whatever attacked him.

In addition to Dugan, the ship cleaners at OBX-RG can tell the investigators about the process to prep the ship. The marine biologist and divers can tell them about the reef and how rebuilding it works, as well as the results from the sample tests. The test results are exactly the same as from other rebuilding projects. Only the mutations are different.

Video of the Attack

OBX-RG will also let the investigators look at videos that the divers took. The first month of footage looks normal. Then a storm hit and the ship shifted on the ocean floor. After that, the marine life in and around the reef started to change. By the time of the attack, the video shows a reef that looks like an alien landscape. Investigators with Marine Biology or experience with reef diving will recognize corals and fish common to the North Carolina coast, but they're larger than any the investigators have seen before, misshapen, with extra appendages and mouths, missing fins, and strange tentacles. Some have fur, feathers, or beaks! Even the kelp and seaweed seem to have attained sentience. A mass of kelp swarms Vassen in the video, and the investigators see it slice through his shark suit. The blood from his cuts causes a feeding frenzy by the other coral and fish in the reef. Vassen was lucky to get away and will be recovering for months. It's unlikely he'll ever be able to dive again—or if he'll want to.

Other Maritime Research Sources

The investigators can also speak to people at the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and the Coast Guard, although they don't have much more to tell than OBX-RG. They've worked with OBX-RG on other projects like the Hatteras Reef and nothing like this has ever happened before. Reports of unusual fish mutations have increased since the ship was scuttled at the reef, though, and they are investigating it as well. The NCWRC staff will share information with the investigators, but the Coast Guard will not without proper legal documents.

Locals

Locals, especially fishermen, have first-hand experience with the mutated fish that have started to show up. At first, there were only a few weird looking fish, but now, most of what they catch is downright unnatural. They certainly don't feel good about eating any of it. The Keeper should note that eating the mutated fish doesn't cause any ill-effects such as mutation, but there is an increased risk that a fish will have mutated to be poisonous or have acidic blood.

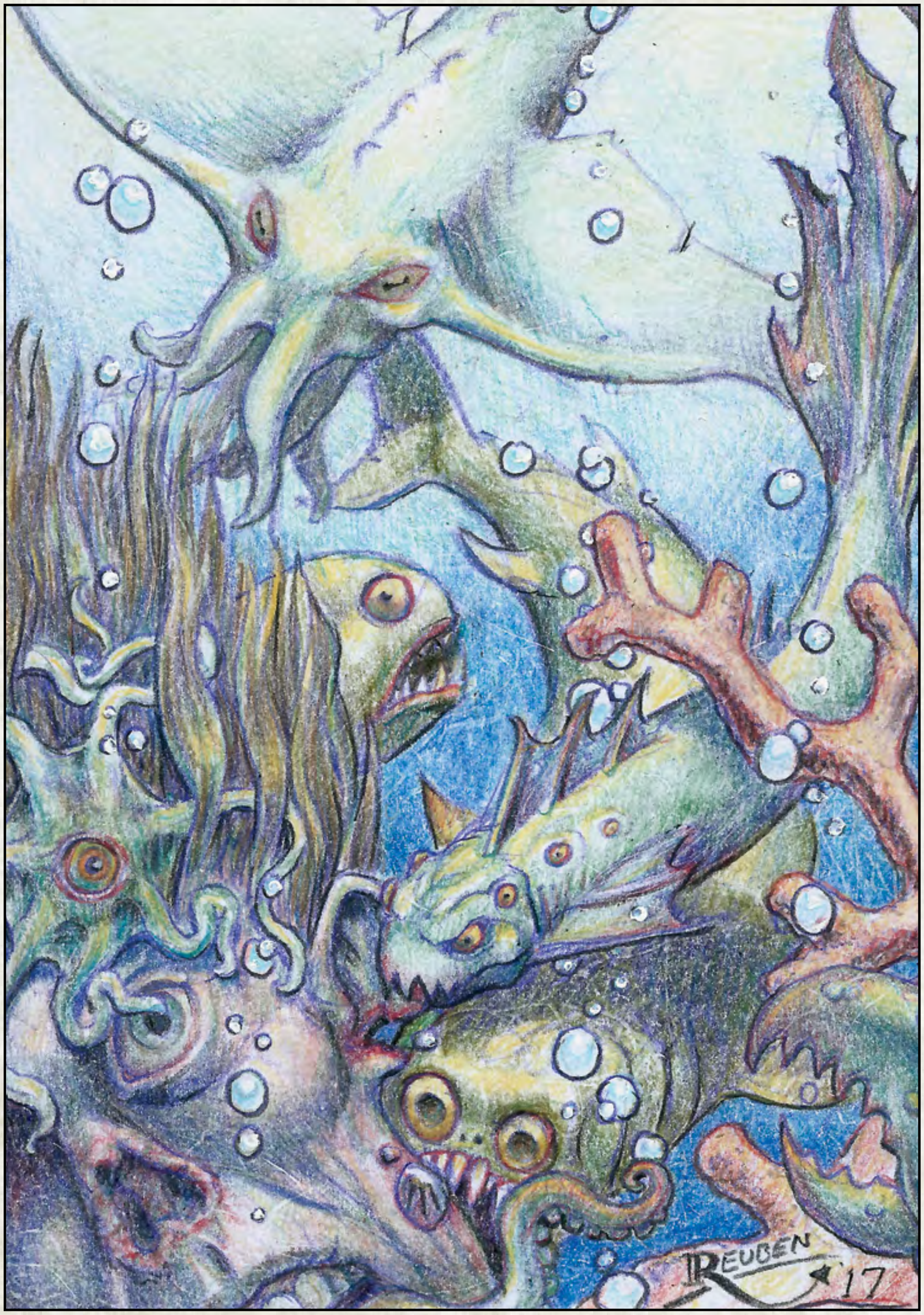
Although tourists at the beach aren't as familiar with the usual marine life around Hatteras, some of them will see the mutated fish after they start showing up on the beach. They can also tell the investigators about the attacks on swimmers and dead bodies on the beach once that starts happening.

Management at the cannery is less inclined to talk to the investigators. They don't want to provoke a scare that their fish are unsafe. They will assure the investigators that they thoroughly inspect all catches before processing and discard any unsuitable fish. Investigators might be able to find a worker who will confirm the increased number of mutated fish, unlike anything anyone's seen before.

Either the police at the dock when the injured diver is brought ashore, the people at OBX-RG, or the Coast Guard can identify Solomon Lestari for the investigators. They're familiar with him from his protests against the reef project. A check of local records or quick Internet search will unearth Solomon's address.

It Came from the Deep!

The Keeper should include a pattern of attacks of increasing severity, as necessary, to increase the terror level and guide the investigators through the scenario. The day after the injured diver is brought to the docks, more people are attacked



periodically at the beach or on fishing vessels. Dead bodies and mutated fish begin to wash ashore, too. Eventually, some specimens develop mutations that enable them to come ashore to attack people, too.

The Reef

Solomon Lestari, once located, is eager to tell his story and assist the investigators.

Unless they already have their own scuba gear, the investigators will either need to rent some from a dive shop or convince OBX-RG to loan them some. They will also need training to dive, if they've never done it before. If necessary, the investigators can convince Solomon Lestari, the people at OBX-RG, or possibly the Coast Guard to do the dive instead, but the Keeper should make sure that the investigators are at least on the boat when the dive happens. This is a prime opportunity for the mutations of Hatteras Reef to attack the investigators, either as they swim through the Christiana trying to get to the sapeh, or by attacking the dive ship directly. The mutations include not only fish, but also crab, live corals, sea grass, kelp, and any other living flora or fauna within a radius around the reef that increases by one mile per day. The longer the investigators take to go to the Christiana, the harder it will be to get there.

MOVIE NIGHT

Humanoids from the Deep (1980), *Piranha* (1978) and its many sequels, *Barracuda* (1978), *Mega Shark vs. Giant Octopus* (2009), and the rest of the Sci-Fi Channel's "mutated sea creature" library.

The Sapeh

The sapeh is nearly indestructible. Even the strings cannot be cut. Although a massive bomb might be able to damage it enough to render it unplayable, that would cause a tidal wave that would wreak untold destruction on the North Carolina coast.

The investigators can successfully reverse the effect of the sapeh by using underwater torches to seal it in the ship's hull again, or bringing it onshore and putting it somewhere that it can't be played. The ocean currents moving over the strings are simulating the sapeh being played and causing the marine life nearby to be mutated.

If the investigators fail to stop the effect of the sapeh, its influence spreads throughout the ocean and connecting inland rivers, mutating more and more marine life into flesh-eating monsters.

Rewards and Repercussions

If the investigators succeed, they gain 1D8 **SAN**. If they fail, they lose 1D4 **SAN** (assuming they survive).

MUTATED SEA LIFE

STR 75	CON 60	SIZ 60	INT 85	POW 120
DEX 120				HP 12

Damage bonus: none.
Build: 1
Move: 24 (swimming) (it's really fast!)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 60% (30/12), damage 1D4+db (biting)

Dodge 80% (40/16)

Skills: Stealth 75%, Swim 100%.
Defenses: See below.
SAN Loss: 1/1D6
Mutations: Each creature is mutated by the sapeh in different ways. Roll 1D6 and consult the following chart:

1: Armored scales (4 points of armor)

2: Extra mouths (3 attacks per round)

3: Razor fins (additional attack for 1D8 damage)

4: Amphibious (can come on land)

5: Tentacles (Grapple attack at 75%)

6: Double stats for a really formidable adversary

THE SORES

by helen gould

DISEASE
MYTHOS TAINT
COVER-UP
CULT

Introduction

The town of Dirgel, Wales, is not a large one, but it has more than its share of dark history, due to a peculiar cult that almost took over the town in the 1990s. It was run by Bernard and Josephine Davis, a brother and sister who enticed the majority of the town's population into a bizarre ceremony centered on a strange, glowing statue. Luckily, the police arrived in time to save most of those who had been duped by the cult—but many died, covered in weeping, painful sores and smiling all the while. The siblings themselves were dissolved entirely, the sores on their bodies merging until what was left melted onto the statue and was absorbed.

The statue was broken by the police and fell down the hillside into the woods. The statue is not mentioned in any official reports and all written communications about the raid have been hidden or destroyed. Some did this for legitimate reasons, such as avoiding accusations of hysteria or lies. Others did so because they are cult members who managed to escape the raid that day, and hoped to quietly bide their time until the cult could be reassembled.

Some pieces of the statue have re-emerged and are being restored by those who secretly never stopped believing in the cult. This is the cause of a new outbreak of sores and madness in the town, as the people close to the statue's pieces are gradually being corrupted. The town has been placed under government quarantine—only authorized personnel in, and for right now, no one out.

The current cult members are Rebecca Jones, the town's head librarian, and Dr. David Evans, the local family physician. They are attempting to rebuild the statue, re-awaken the deity within it, and fully attain the transcendent state that they came close to fifteen years ago.

There are six pieces of the statue in total. When the scenario begins, the cultists have only found five, which are hidden in the local history rolling stacks of the library (bookshelves on wheels that can be moved from side to side).

The two cultists themselves are largely untouched by the sores, as they have experienced this dark magic before and need much more exposure before it begins to affect them again. But those who were not born yet, or who had hidden themselves in the town to avoid the cult, are highly sensitive to it.

Involving the Investigators

The investigators may be acquaintances of people from the town; residents who have been caught by the quarantine; detectives sent by the local police before the situation got to the current stage; or medical personnel doing research and voluntarily entering the quarantine zone. Someone has now died of "the sores," and the town is beginning to panic.

The symptoms of the disease are: small sores that slowly grow bigger and begin to weep; fever; a loss of lucidity; feelings of utter blissfulness; and, finally, death. The first fatality is an elderly pensioner named Theresa Smith.

The local doctor, Dr. David Evans, insists that he has never seen anything like this before. He claims that samples he sent off to the Mid-Wales hospital have come back negative for any known infectious diseases.

Interviewing Theresa's Acquaintances

Theresa Smith was a widow who lived alone. Her husband, Edmund, died in the early 2000s.

The community is a close one, so anyone asked about Theresa will know that she used to be a journalist and is now an amateur historian; she was also known to visit the library every morning.

The head librarian can confirm this, as can Mrs. Emelia Bell, who owns the local café and knew Theresa well; she was one of her regular customers. Both will explain that Theresa would often photocopy dozens of pages from old reference books and newspapers for her research, which means that her house is now full of old newspapers from top to bottom. Mrs. Bell has a spare key, since they were such good friends.

Dr. David Evans, who treated Theresa, insists that "the sores" is a completely unique affliction that he has never heard of or read about; nor could the nearest hospital identify it. Depending on a **Psychology** check, the investigators may notice that he comes across as nervous, using falsely jolly bluster to cover up half-truths. If confronted, he will force the investigators out. This may also trigger harsher behaviour from Rebecca Jones when the investigators visit the library.

Approximately one in three of the townspeople will have visible sores when the scenario begins. The atmosphere in town is subdued and fearful—if two people with sores see each other, they will immediately avert their eyes. Dr. Evans' waiting room is full of them, some of whom were clearly brought there by relatives (they have already begun to babble nonsense).

Calling the Hospital

Dr. Evans will say that he has spoken to the Head of Epidemiology at Mid-Wales Hospital, but on investigation this turns out to be a lie. Dr. Evans never sent any samples to them for analysis. The Head of Epidemiology, Dr. Meera Sagar, is very worried about the sound of these sores; it sounds very similar to an outbreak from the 1990s. She's never been able to uncover what the cause or cure was in that incident—it's a sort of urban legend in the local medical community, since it's all based on rumours and no cases were ever admitted to the hospital. For all she knows, the disease might never have gone away.

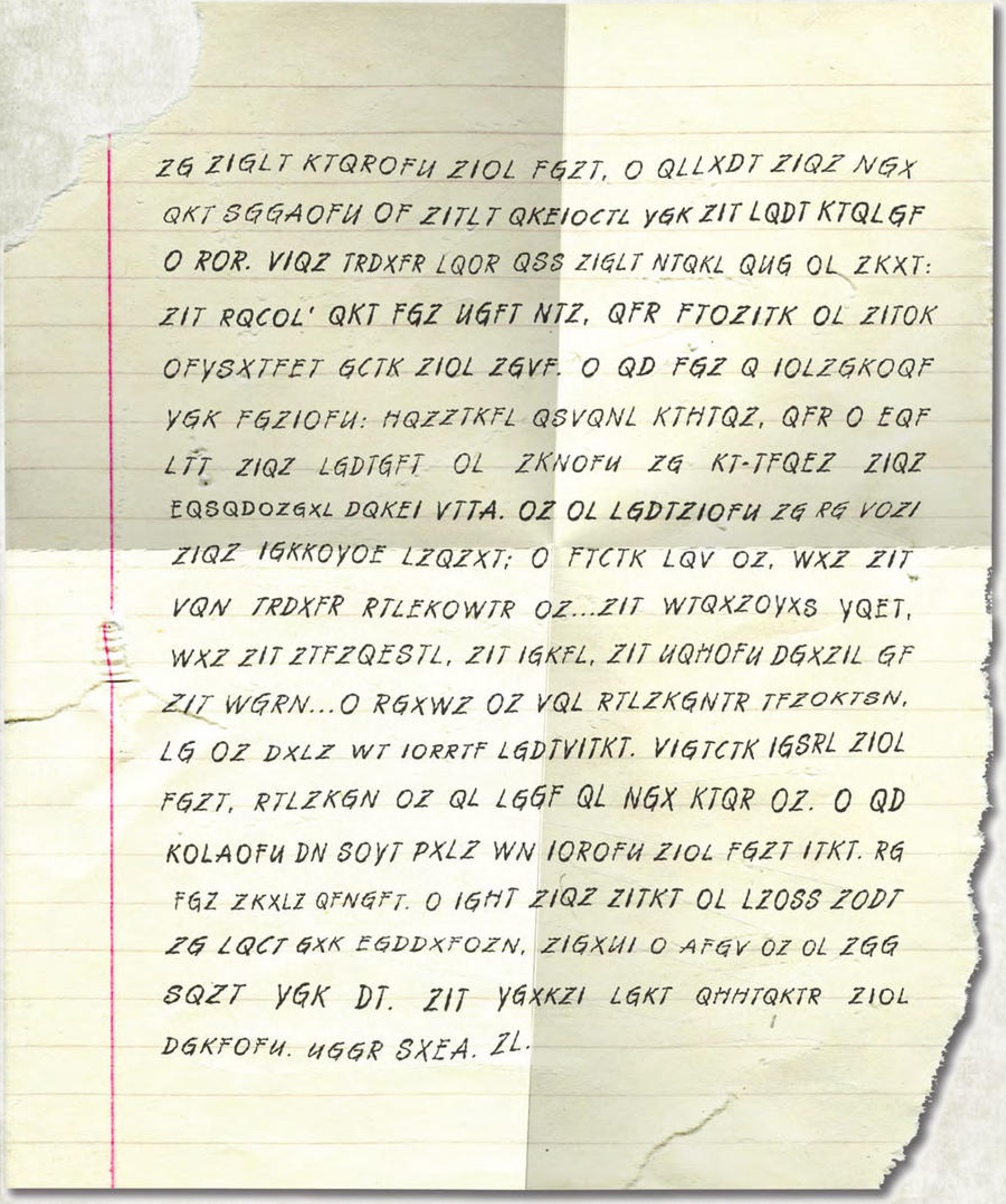
Dr. Sagar also does not have a good opinion of Dr. Evans.

She has met him briefly at conferences and he has always struck her as being a slightly unsavoury character. However, since the town is now under quarantine and he is the resident doctor, she can't travel to Dirgel to see for herself without getting stuck.

Local History Research

The library is split into two parts: the lending library and the reference library. The lending library includes a children's section, but there are no children there now, as they are all being kept at home for fear of infection. This means that the library is

The Sores Investigator Handout #1



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QKT SGGAOFU OF ZITLT QKEIOCTL YGK ZIT LQDT KTQLGF
O ROR. VIQZ TRDXFR LQOR QSS ZIGLT NTQKL QUG OL ZKXT:
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OFYSXTFET GCTK ZIOL ZGVF. O QD FGZ Q IOLZGKOQF
YGK FGZIOFU: HQZZTKFL QSVQNL KTHTQZ, QFR O EQF
LTT ZIQZ LGDTGFT OL ZKNOFU ZG KT-TFQEZ ZIQZ
EQSQDOZGXL DQKEI VTTA. OZ OL LGDTZIOFU ZG RG VOZI
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VQN TRDXFR RTLEKOWTR OZ...ZIT WTQXZOYXS YQET,
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ZIT WGRN...O RGXWZ OZ VQL RTLZKGNTR TFZOKTSN,
LG OZ DXLZ WT IORRTF LGDTVITKT. VIGTCTK IGSRL ZIOL
FGZT, RTLZKGN OZ QL LGGF QL NGX KTQR OZ. O QD
KOLAOFU DN SOYT PXLZ WN IOROFU ZIOL FGZT ITKT. RG
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SQZT YGK DT. ZIT YGXKZI LGKT QHHTQKTR ZIOL
DGKFOFU. UGGR SXEA. ZL.

even quieter than usual.

The local history section is located in the reference library, in its own room apart from the rest of the books and journals. There are also several computers there.

Successful **Library Use** checks in the town library's local history archives will reveal the following:

- There is a six-month period in the mid-1990s that seem to be entirely missing in the physical records, which skip directly from October 8, 1993 to March 21, 1994. The online newspaper archives report nothing out of the ordinary, though there don't seem to be as many stories during this period, and there is a sudden jump in obituaries (no cause of death given) towards the end of March.

- There is a passing reference to a new family moving in, the Davises. It comes with a picture of Bernard and Josephine Davis. There is something unsettling about their faces and smiles. It's almost as if they are moving within the picture.

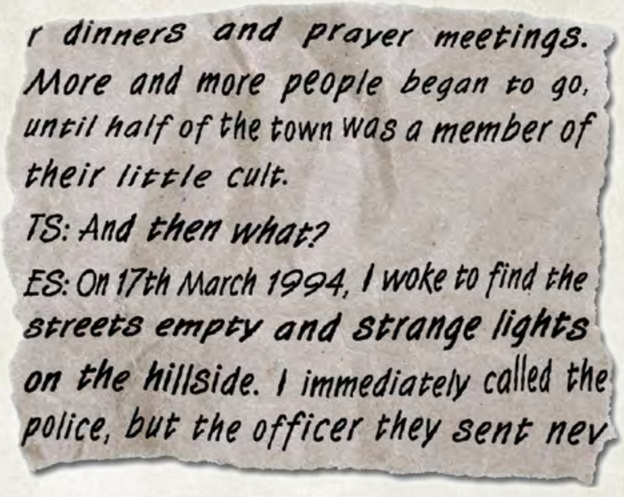
- Looking under 'D' for Davis in the newspaper archives will reveal an additional photograph. This time, the brother and sister are surrounded by many other people from the village. Everyone is smiling, but again, there is something fluid about their expressions. Rebecca Jones and Dr. Evans are standing closest to the siblings. The date on the back of the photograph is March 2, 1994.

- Someone has left a coded note in shaky handwriting in one of the empty archive files. Deciphering it will require a successful **INT** roll (automatically successful to anyone with above a base chance in **Cryptography**). Once translated, it reads: "To those reading this note, I assume that you are looking in these archives for the same reason I did. What Edmund said all those years ago is true: the Davises are not gone yet, and neither is their influence over this town. I am not a historian for nothing: patterns always repeat, and I can see that someone is trying to re-enact that calamitous March week. It is something to do with that horrific statue; I never saw it, but the way Edmund described it...the beautiful face, but the tentacles, the horns, the gaping mouths on the body...I doubt it was destroyed entirely, so it must be hidden somewhere. Whoever holds this note, destroy it as soon as you read it. I am risking my life just by hiding this note here. Do not trust anyone. I hope that there is still time to save our community, though I know it is too late for me. The fourth sore appeared this morning. Good luck. TS." **SAN** loss for reading this note is 0/1.

Speaking to the Librarian

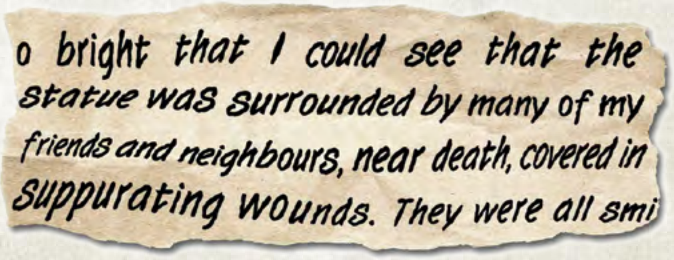
If the investigators ask Rebecca Jones about the missing records, she will feign absolute bafflement and generally come across as a harmless old lady. However, if pressed, she will turn cold very abruptly and inquire as to what such complete strangers would want with those documents, eventually locking the door to the archives.

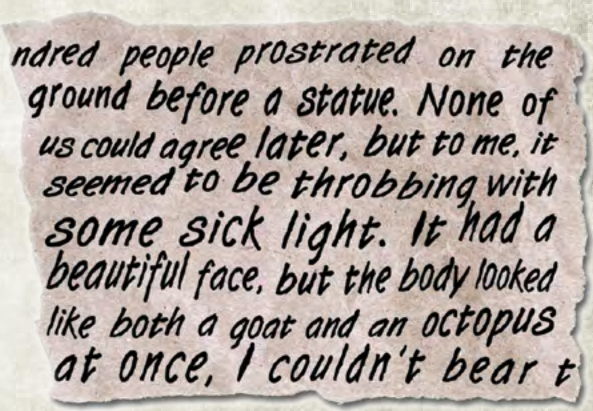
The Sores Investigator Handout #2

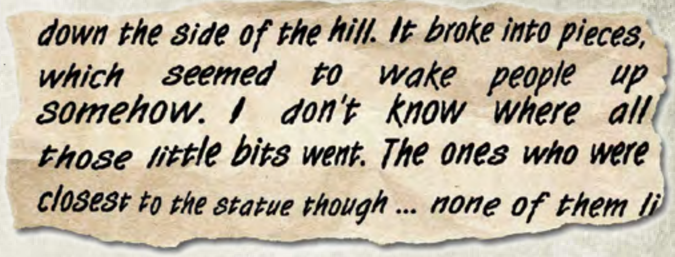

r dinners and prayer meetings. More and more people began to go, until half of the town was a member of their little cult.

TS: And then what?

ES: On 17th March 1994, I woke to find the streets empty and strange lights on the hillside. I immediately called the police, but the officer they sent nev


o bright that I could see that the statue was surrounded by many of my friends and neighbours, near death, covered in suppurating wounds. They were all smi


ndred people prostrated on the ground before a statue. None of us could agree later, but to me, it seemed to be throbbing with some sick light. It had a beautiful face, but the body looked like both a goat and an octopus at once. I couldn't bear t


down the side of the hill. It broke into pieces, which seemed to wake people up somehow. I don't know where all those little bits went. The ones who were closest to the statue though ... none of them li

REUBEN '17

Exploring Theresa Smith's House

After acquiring the key from Mrs. Bell, a genuinely lovely woman who is happy to help, the investigators will find that Theresa's door barely opens because of the sheer number of newspapers stacked in the hall. There is only room to walk in single file. In the cellar, there are pictures of various people from the town, but two are circled in red with the word "ACTIVE?" above them: Rebecca Jones and Dr. David Evans. The photograph from the library is also there, with their faces circled again. As before, the images seem to shift slightly, as though something is moving underneath the paper.

There is a large, heavy, locked desk in the center of the room. A Hard **DEX** or **STR** check or a **Locksmith** check is needed to open it. Inside are photocopies of the missing newspapers and several fragments of a transcribed conversation on the events of March 1994.

The fragments read:

"r dinners and prayer meetings. More and more people began to go, until half of the town was a member of their little cult. TS: And then what? ES: On 17th March 1994, I woke to find the streets empty and strange lights on the hillside. I immediately called the police, but the officer they sent nev"

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"down the side of the hill. It broke into pieces, which seemed to wake people up somehow. I don't know where all those little bits went. The ones who were closest to the statue though...none of them li"

Their Turn

At this point, or at another opportune moment after the investigators have visited the library, one or more of them should notice that they have developed a sore. They suppurate readily, penetrate deep into the muscle and even the bone, exude copious amounts of pus and fluid, and spread quickly—**SAN** loss 1/1D6. After the first discovery of a sore, the investigators will find more and more of them. How fast the disease progresses and how badly the characters are afflicted depends both on the characters' **CON** and the Keeper's discretion. As investigators enter each escalating stage (i.e., fever, loss of lucidity, and blissfulness) they should roll for a 1/1D4 **SAN** loss.

Involving the Police

Calling the police or going to the station with suggestions that this is a recurrence of some kind of cultist-mediated disease from fifteen years earlier will have the investigators regarded with confusion, then amusement, then anger. It is clear that most of the current police force were either too young, or in a different area, at the time of the original cult incident, and have put it down to local superstitions.

However, a successful **Credit Rating** or **Law** check will have the investigators introduced to Chief Inspector Rose Cassidy. She will take the investigators into her office and hear them out quietly, and then advise them all never to speak of it again. She was there at the time and she is sure that no one could have found the pieces of the statue, let alone put it back together. This must be a completely different disease. She will not hear another word.

Breaking into the Library

The library is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 1pm on Saturdays, and closed entirely on Sundays. It is a typical, unassuming, small town library, made of red brick. If the investigators are stealthily tailing either Rebecca or David, they can see them approach by foot and enter the library shortly before nightfall, locking the door behind them.

Once night falls, each investigator should roll a **Spot Hidden** check. If one of them is successful, they will notice that the library is glowing slightly. As the investigators approach, the strange, pulsing light becomes brighter and brighter. It creates strange shadows that crawl and shudder around the corners. It is glowing because the sixth piece of the statue has just been found.

The front door is locked, but can be broken down. However, a stealthy approach is the ideal route to take in order to take Rebecca and David by surprise. The windows are closed, but unlocked, and the back door is much less sturdy than the front.

Entering the building at this stage will result in their sores growing worse. Investigators should roll for 1D4 points of damage. Another 1D4 points of damage should be assessed every minute that they are in the building once the statue is assembled.

Confronting the Cult Members

Rebecca and David have managed to put the six pieces of the statue together, filling in the gaps with other stones. Of the two of them, Rebecca is in charge; her face is twisted and contorts strangely in the bizarre light. David is following her lead, repeating her chants.

Once interrupted, Rebecca will screech like a dying thing; she does not want the ritual to be interrupted for a second time. She will direct David to stop the investigators, as he is physically much stronger than her, and she is the one who knows the words. David is also infected with occult strength due to the proximity of the statue.

Despite this, it is possible for David to be reasoned with. This requires a Hard **Persuade** or **Intimidate** check. If passed, he will run away rather than confront Rebecca. Whilst the investigators are dealing with him, Rebecca will be attempting to touch the statue and dissolve into it, just as Bernard and Josephine did all those years ago.

As she comes closer and closer to it, her skin ripples and tears into multiple sores, her flesh beginning to drip off; and yet, she has plainly never felt such bliss. If she actually touches the statue, she will indeed melt into it. If interrupted before she achieves this, she will attack wildly.

The statue itself is not a living being as such, though it has deadly effects on anyone standing too close to it. The investigators' disease will be advancing very rapidly in its presence. They must choose whether to sacrifice one person to dismantle it and allow the others to go free, or whether all of them wish to run and save what is left of their skin. However, if they do choose to run, the radius of the statue's influence will grow and infect the rest of the town.

Rewards and Repercussions

Destroying the statue results in an award of 1D6 **SAN**; but if the investigators have witnessed Rebecca melting into it, charge 1D6 **SAN**.

DR. DAVID EVANS

STR 70 CON 135 SIZ 55 INT 80 POW 75
DEX 50 APP 40 EDU 120 SAN 10 HP 19

Damage bonus: +1D6
Build: 2
Move: 7

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 55% (27/11), damage 1D3+db. He may pick up or use any nearby blunt instruments, such as chairs (1D4+db) and tables (1D6+db)

Dodge 20% (10/4)

Skills: Credit Rating 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 15%, Drive Automobile 50%, Language (English and Welsh) 75%, Medicine 80%, Occult 5%.
Defenses: Immune to checks for unconsciousness from combat damage.
Nationality: Welsh
Age: 47
Education: Doctor of Medicine
Spells: none.

REBECCA JONES

STR 50 CON 90 SIZ 35 INT 80 POW 90
DEX 80 APP 40 EDU 80 SAN 0 HP 12

Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 6

ATTACKS

Fighting (Dirty) 55% (27/11), damage 1D3+db. She will typically use spells rather than physical weapons, however.

Dodge 70% (35/14)

Skills: Credit Rating 60%, Cthulhu Mythos 25%, Drive Automobile 50%, Dodge 70%, Language (English and Welsh) 75%, Library Use 80%, Occult 20%.
Defenses: None above base.
Nationality: English
Age: 59
Education: U.K. degree in Library Science
Spells: Bind Enemy, Deflect Harm, Flesh Ward

UP JUMPED THE REAPER

by chad bowser

ISOLATION

RURAL FOLK
ESCAPE
HIDDEN ENEMY

Introduction

NIKKI SANDSON IS A PROMISING GRADUATE STUDENT PURSUING A DEGREE IN AMERICAN FOLKLORE. FOR HER DISSERTATION, SHE HAD PLANNED TO CATALOG AND ANALYZE THE TALES OF SEVERAL ISOLATED COMMUNITIES DEEP IN THE WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAINS. NOW, SHE AND HER BOYFRIEND ARE MISSING IN THE RUGGED TERRAIN AND HER FAMILY FEARS THE WORST.

Keeper's Background

This scenario is inspired by and follows the themes of the late, North Carolinian writer of weird tales, Manly Wade Wellman. To get the most out of it, Keepers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with some of his Appalachian folklore-oriented weird tales, such as the "Silver John" stories.

Nikki Sandson was the first in her family to go to college and she didn't let the streak die there. First a Master's degree, and then a doctoral program, fell beneath her determined feet. She's also the first in her family to become the host for an extra-dimensional entity.

Deep in the mountains of North Carolina, she ran afoul of something the locals call the Reaper Man. While researching mountain folklore for her dissertation, she and her boyfriend stumbled across the Ol' Curarituck Place, a homestead built on the spot where the Shadowing, an inverse copy of the world, bleeds through. Now long abandoned and shunned by the larger community of Gadsen's Bend, it's where Sandson accidentally awoke the Reaper Man, and she became the creature's way to escape the Shadowing. Her vessel is proving weak, though, and the Reaper Man needs a new one. Her first victim was her boyfriend, Roger Martin, who is now a Hollow Man.

The investigators will need to enter the Shadowing and confront the Reaper Man on his own turf, if they have any hopes of ending his menace.

Involving the Investigators

The investigators are brought in to investigate the disappearance of Nikki Sandson and Roger Martin. They could be members of North Carolina's State Highway Patrol; private investigators hired by one of the families or the university; or just friends worried about the young couple.

The following information is easily found when the investigators start to dig into the mystery:

- Nikki was a Ph.D. candidate in the American Folk Studies Program; her dissertation in progress was titled "Eschatology in the Tales of the Blue Ridge Mountains." She was an excellent and dedicated student, with a bright future.
- Roger was a volunteer at a legal aid society, but not otherwise gainfully employed. He relied on a small stipend from the state disability program after a car accident claimed 95% of his vision.
- They were a happy couple, but had no plans to marry. They were experienced hikers.
- They flew into the Asheville, North Carolina Regional Airport before driving to Graham County, about a two-hour drive deeper into the mountains. They planned to camp or rely on local hospitality once there.
- The final communication that anyone received from Nikki was a social media post showing her smiling in front of a wooden sign reading "Gadsen's Bend," with a steeple looming in the background. The picture is captioned "Heading into the dead zone! ;)"
- Calls to her or Roger's cell phones go straight to voice mail; their phones are off and do not register on GPS. The last GPS ping from either of their phones came from a tower near Gadsen's Bend.

Gadsen's Bend

Gadsen's Bend can be summed up by the total of its Wikipedia entry: "An unincorporated community in Graham County, North Carolina." It's at the intersection of two twisty, minor roads. Twenty families live on various by-ways that wind their way through the forested mountains. For every occupied home, another has fallen into decay and disrepair. Even occupied homes are in poor condition. Tin roofs are rusted through, windows are broken, and porches sag dangerously. A small general store is resupplied every other week. One of the abandoned buildings is a gas station.

The only other information about Gadsen's Bend on the web is a website for St. Elijah's Perdition, the community church looming over the intersection. The site, designed in the mid-1990s, proclaims the church to be an "Evangelical Church for all the Lost SINNERS of the Mountains looking to return to the BIBLE," and led by Pastor Desmond Michaux.

The people of Gadsen's Bend survive on welfare and selling homemade crafts at roadside stands. They're suspicious of strangers coming into their community, and protective of their homes, but not hostile.

The community is on a route patrolled by the Graham County Sheriff, but the sheriff's office can't remember the last time that they answered a call for Gadsen's Bend. The sheriff's office categorizes the residents of the community as "good people who keep to themselves." At any given time, a sheriff's car is 45 minutes away. If the sheriff's is informed about the missing couple, he'll organize a search party, which will take 24 hours to assemble. The heavy woods preclude effective air searches.

The People of Gadsen's Bend

The first thing that outsiders notice when they come to Gadsen's Bend, and something that keeps many of them driving, are the heavy scars that cover almost everyone's face. Most people have scars around their mouths, some have scars around their eyes or are even missing an eye, and a few people are missing one hand. Michaux preaches a unique and punitive version of the Bible. Utter a profanity and your mouth is sewn shut for a while. Covet something and one of your eyes is temporarily sewn shut. Steal from a fellow congregant and lose a hand. These are Michaux's rules and he enforces them. All of his congregants toe the line.

When the investigators arrive in town, the residents will hustle inside and peer from behind blinds. Overly persistent investigators will get one warning about the Second Amendment. As if by magic, once the investigators meet with Michaux, the doors of the town all open to the investigators.

The Forest

The forest that surrounds Gadsen's Bend is a dark and scary place. The trees all hang menacingly over roads and many are warped and stunted. The closer to the Hollow one gets, the more evil they seem. Some even have leering devil's faces carved in their bark.

St. Elijah's Perdition

This one-story, clapboard church looms over the main intersection in Gadsen's Bend. Michaux's small, two-room parsonage is next door. Michaux will be in one of these two locations twenty-four hours a day. He greets strangers warmly. He met Nikki, and will answer any questions the investigators have to the best of his ability.

- She was in town a day or so ago. Her car is still parked in the church lot. She seemed like a nice enough girl, although she was traveling with a man who wasn't her husband. When the Golden Ladder comes down, not everybody will be treated the same, and Michaux hopes Nikki will have righted her ways by then.
- He told her about the local folklore he knew: The lights on Welliver Peak are souls of the lost. The devil dog that takes sinners who stray too far from the road. The ghost regiment, some of Cornwallis' soldiers who got lost and now wander forever.
- He won't say anything about the Reaper Man or the Shadowing unless specifically asked and the info is teased from him. He knows that these tales, unlike the other folktales, are only too true and terrifying. If he is asked, he can tell the investigators that the Reaper Man lives in a place called the Shadowing. A world not unlike ours, but where he is Lord. He always tries to enter our world, and several generations ago had found a way in with Horace Currituck, but Ol' Curritusk tricked him and locked the Reaper Man away.
- He told Nikki to talk to others in town, such as Silas Standley or Peggy DesChamps, for more tales.
- Nikki said she and her beau were going to go hiking along the Southeast Ridge to get photos and a "feel" for the place.

Nikki's Prius

The locked, road-weary car sits in the church parking lot. Papers, notebooks, textbooks, a pack of candy bars, energy-drink cans, and a drained bottle of grain alcohol cover the backseat.

- Nikki has several journals. The most recent has entries that include: "Michaux…hiding something?" "Standley mentioned Pettigrew—a hoodoo woman!!?" "An old carny wagon? Surely story there." "Be afraid of deep shadows?"
- Folded and stuck in one of the journals are some photocopied pages from a rare book, *Legends and Folklore of Appalachia*, an oral history compilation generated by several Miskatonic U. field historians in the 1920s. These pages have a highlighted entry on "Reapers." They are malevolent spirits that figure in some of the early folklore of the Appalachians. Annotations in the margin note that she could only find two other references in folklore to these "Reapers" and also note: "This is a Ph.D. right here!"
- A dead cell phone is under some papers. If it's charged and unlocked there are numerous photos, including the online social media post. The most recent photos show a ruined, ominous looking house, nestled in a valley. This is the Ol' Curritsuck Place.

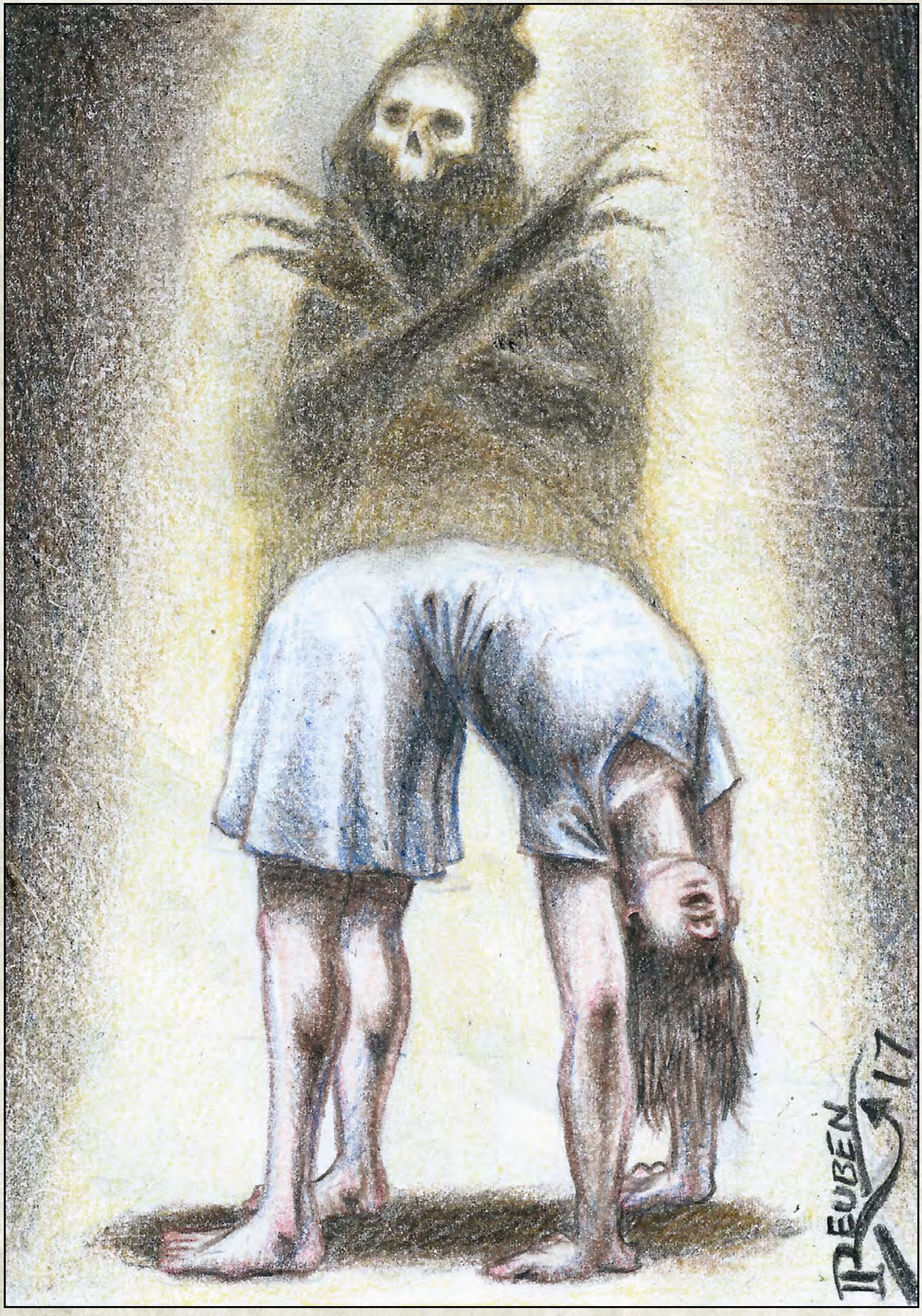
TRACK MARKS

Legends and Folklore of Appalachia appears in "**Separation Anxiety**," the first scenario in this book.

Silas Standley and Peggy DesChamps

- These two residents are founts of folklore. They love nothing more than sitting on a porch with a bottle of liquor, trading tales. Silas is missing an eye from a youthful indiscretion when he beat up a rival for the Finn girl at the old dance hall. They're more forthcoming than Michaux, especially once the liquor starts to flow.

FEAR'S SHARP LITTLE NEEDLES



- Silas told the couple about Hettie Pettigrew, a woman who lives up on Welliver Peak. She's a strange old one, as is her son, Robicheau.
- DesChamps mentioned how a carnival came through once and they left a wagon on the Southeast Ridge, "cause a carny disappeared and the rest of the crew were afraid to take his stuff. A demon horse can still be seen some nights."
- They'll recognize the picture of the Ol' Curritruck Place, haunted by ghosts ever since Horace Curritruck disappeared well on 90 years ago. His house is over in the Hollow, a good hike north of the intersection.
- Davey Washington, a local, was smitten by Nikki and followed her around like a puppy, despite her beau. He hasn't been seen since she disappeared. (***Keeper's Note:*** *he's also become a Hollow Man.*)
- They can also repeat the folk tales told by Michaux, including those about the Shadowing.

The Southeast Ridge

The Southeast Ridge is a twenty minute hike from the road. A rusting silver-bullet trailer sits here, overlooking a stream. The tires have rotted, the door hangs by only one hinge, and a nasty looking vulture perches on its roof. Trees have grown up around it. It's a small two room trailer that smells of mold and rot. The front is a small kitchenette and the rear is a living area. There's no bathroom. The inside is decorated in tattered and torn circus posters proclaiming shows up and down the eastern seaboard. The most recent is 1974. Old clothes are still in the drawers and tin cans have given up their contents to predators over the years. There are a few tidbits of information here:

- Bones poke up from a shallow grave. These are horse bones and the skull has a bullet hole through it. This is a red herring.
- There are fresh footprints around the trailer. These are from Nikki and Roger scouting around.
- There are several charcoal drawings in a drawer in the trailer. They show an old, dilapidated house wreathed in shadows. Several people in circus attire crab-walk around the exterior. This is the carny's take on the Ol' Curritruck Place.

The Hollow

This is a narrow valley filled with thick trees and lined by steep 20' stone ridges. It can only be entered from the west, where the valley rises up to meet the rest of the forest. The Ol' Curritruck Place is at the east end in a clearing.

There's no animal activity here. A new tent is pitched about 300 feet from the house. Two sleeping bags stick out of the tent. One still contains Roger. If he's poked or prodded, he lashes out with his long claws.

A woman's weak cries can be heard from the Ol' Curritruck Place.

Ol' Curritruck Place

Even if it weren't where two dimensions collided, this old house would still be a death trap. Floor boards are rotten, wall paper is peeling, and the stone foundation is shifting. The interplay of dimensions has rendered the house indestructible via normal means, however.

Nikki is here, in the cellar, with a badly broken leg and a rotten beam piercing her abdomen, both of which occurred when she fell through the floor. Her screams attracted the attention of the Reaper Man, and he possessed her. He initially went looking for prey, but could only make it to Pettigrew's and her charms kept him at bay; Nikki's failing body was too weak. He returned here to wait for eventual rescuers.

There are two Hollow Men, the carny and Davey, hiding in the house waiting to attack, preferably while the investigators are focused on hauling out Nikki. Roger is a third Hollow Man.

If she's helped out, she will gladly accept help back into town where she can find a better vessel. Those with medical knowledge (**Medicine** or Hard **First Aid**) recognize her wounds as fatal; she should not be alive.

Pettigrew's House

Hettie Pettigrew lives up on Welliver Peak, with her 30-year-old son Robicheau, in a large shack. There's no driveway and it's a thirty-five-minute walk through the woods, up the mountain, from the road. All kinds of occult symbols hang from the porch's roof, including green glass bottles, Ziploc bags filled with red fluid, birds' wings, a wooden box holding the skeleton of an infant, lizards, a copy of Simon's *Necronomicon* with every page marked through with words like, "Crap!" "Idiot!" or "Couldn't find it with both hands!"

Unless the investigators are particularly stealthy, they're greeted several hundred feet from the cabin by a screaming, one-handed Robicheau, waving a lawn-mower blade over his head ordering them off his ma's land. He won't actually attack, but will menacingly lunge.

Hettie can calm him, if the investigators can't. She invites the investigators in and offers them some bread, salt, and beer. She can offer the following information:

- She saw Nikki try to approach her house, but the girl wouldn't come close. She looked badly injured.
- The Reaper Man lives in the Shadowing, a dark copy of this world filled with evil, where he is served by his Hollow Men. He tries to get into this world to take control.
- The nexus of the Shadowing and our world is the Ol' Curritruck Place.

- To fight the Reaper Man, one has to enter the Shadowing. But, unless one invites the Reaper Man in, they have to use a Hand of Glory to enter it. (A Hand of Glory is a candle, made from a prepared human hand, using the fingers for wicks. In folklore, its powers include the ability to unlock doors, both physical and metaphysical. A successful **Occult** roll or sufficient research discloses this.)

Hettie can make a Hand of Glory; all that she needs is a hand. She does have Robicheau's hand in a jar, should it be needed. She advises them not to let it burn out once they enter the Shadowing, unless they're looking to relocate there permanently.

The Shadowing

Using the Hand of Glory allows the bearer, and those in close proximity to them, to enter the Shadowing when they step over the threshold of the Ol' Currituck Place. Hettie can also provide a ritual to use the Hand to open the Shadowing anywhere, for the cost of 1D8 **SAN**.

Everything is in black and white and shadows swirl in the Shadowing. Here, the Reaper Man will attempt to kill all who oppose him. Here, normal weapons can damage him.

The Hand of Glory will burn for 1D10 rounds per digit, unless the Reaper Man finds a way to extinguish it, which he will certainly try to do.

Resolutions

The primary way to resolve the situation is to kill the Reaper Man, which can only be effectively accomplished in the Shadowing. If Nikki is brought back to town, Michaux might try to exorcise her (50% chance to succeed), but if he does, all that is left behind is her now-empty corpse.

Rewards and Repercussions

If the characters kill the Reaper Man, they earn 1D6 **SAN**. Exorcising him from Nikki earns 1 **SAN** as they realize they've helped in the short term, but not the long term. Reporting Nikki and Roger's final fates earn 1D4 **SAN**.

Hollow Men

These are the left behind shells of people who have been pulled into the Shadowing. They look like gaunt versions of the person that they once were. Their chests are voids filled with stars that they try to pull people into. When attacked, they start to chip away, their bodies melting into shadow.

HOLLOW MEN

STR 90 CON 95 SIZ 75 INT 65 POW 60
DEX 85 HP 17
Damage bonus: +1D6
Build: 2
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 80% (40/16), damage 1D3+db (razor sharp claws)

Grapple 60% (30/12). If they can grapple a target for four rounds, they can suck the target into their chest and regain 1D10 HP. The victim becomes one more shadow in the Shadowing, lost forever.

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Stealth 75%.
Defenses: 2 points of dried skin.
SAN Loss: 1/1D4

THE REAPER MAN, Lord of the Shadowing

STR 100 CON 95 SIZ 95 INT 85 POW 100
DEX 85 HP 19
Damage bonus: +1D6
Build: 2
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 80% (40/16), damage 1D6+db (shadow claws)

Possession: Can possess one target at a time on a successful **POW** vs. **POW** roll, including dead or dying targets. A victim can be freed through appropriate magic or exorcism, at the Keeper's discretion.

Skills: Stealth 80%.
Defenses: Can only be harmed in the Shadowing. Even there, piercing weapons only do 1 point of damage.
SAN Loss: 1/1D8

RESURRECTION

by stuart boon

RETRIBUTION
ALIENATION

HIDDEN SECRETS
LOYALTY

Introduction

THIS SCENARIO BEGINS IN MEDIA RES, WITH ALL OF THE CHARACTERS ATTENDING THE FUNERAL OF A FRIEND, TED BANKS. IDEALLY, THE SCENARIO SHOULD BE LOCATED IN THE KEEPER'S OWN CITY, OR A CITY NEARBY, WITH A COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY, AND MAKE USE OF REAL LOCATIONS. AT LEAST ONE OF THE INVESTIGATORS SHOULD HAVE GONE TO COLLEGE WITH TED.

The sole antagonist in "**Resurrection**" is Marcus Grey, another college friend who vanished from a freshman party three years ago and was presumed dead a year later. At least one of the investigators is now in their final year of college or university. Shockingly, the presumed-dead Marcus makes a brief appearance at Ted's funeral.

Marcus' tale is a sad one. Three years ago, he wandered away, drunk, from a party and was abducted by Adam Haverman, a sadistic psychopath. Returning to his suburban home, Haverman caged the unconscious 19-year-old in a crude basement dungeon. Marcus was tortured and tormented daily, as Haverman reenacted the same abuse done to him years earlier. Slowly, Marcus was driven insane and came to blame his friends for his suffering: they had, after all, taken him to the party, got him drunk, and essentially led him into Haverman's hands.

Marcus finally escaped and murdered his captor, a few months prior to the funeral. Damaged and ravening, Marcus has constructed a dungeon of his own in the city and is looking for revenge.

Though Haverman did not live to see it, his work on Marcus was successful: the young man's only motive is to twist others as he himself was twisted. Ted Banks was his first prey, but Banks quickly escaped and, when threatened with capture again, killed himself. Imagine Marcus' pleasure when his old "friends" came to Banks' funeral. Throughout the scenario, Marcus will play cat-and-mouse with his former friends, doing his best to capture them one at a time. Being insane, Marcus is an unpredictable and daring predator, capable of things the investigators would deem unthinkable.

Though dangerous, Marcus is still only human—unless you use the ghoul option described nearby—and can be defeated as any normal person might. He remains, however, a physically formidable foe, possessed of a terrifying single-mindedness. The investigators should ultimately find him in his lair, or in a similarly confining and threatening setting, and be forced to "deal" with their former friend, now fiend.

Beginning the Adventure

On a grey and miserable afternoon, Ted Banks' coffin is lowered into the ground. All of the investigators attend. His "accidental" death is perplexing; Ted was extraordinarily cautious. ***Keeper's Note:*** *if possible, use a local landmark for Ted's death; for example, his falling from a cliff, bridge, or campus building, or slipping into a fast-running river, etc.* As the canopy of black umbrellas moves, beetle-like, toward the cemetery gates, a gap opens up where the investigators spy a lone figure facing them. The figure wears a sodden grey hood and the glowing, smoking ember of a cigarette hangs lazily from his mouth. Apart from a series of scars on the young man's face, he is the spitting image of Marcus Grey. But he's been missing for three years and presumed dead! A smile forms on Marcus' face before he disappears beneath the cover of the black umbrellas.

Questions abound: Is he alive? Have they seen a ghost? Why didn't he greet them? How did he end up scarred? And where the hell has he gone now?

Marcus is quick and distant enough to escape capture, but he won't go far, preferring to stay close to his quarry. Marcus now begins his hunt in earnest, carefully tracking the investigators. The Keeper can choose, or roll randomly to determine, whom Marcus goes after first.

If this first appearance isn't enough to motivate the investigators to investigate, then have Marcus quickly try for one of the investigators, but fail to capture them…this time. Perhaps after the attack, they hear Marcus' telltale laugh. Whenever possible, Marcus will taunt the investigators. Keepers should use this and other devices to build up a threatening atmosphere.

A MYTHOS TWIST

If the Keeper wishes to introduce a more direct Mythos element, you might replace the psychopathic Adam Haverman with a deranged ghoul who similarly abuses Marcus. In this case, the investigators might need to search the sewers, rather than suburbia, to find the dungeon where Marcus was transformed. Again, if you desire, Marcus himself could be transitioning to a ghoul and be bent on devouring his friends to hasten his traumatic turning. Or he could be trying to gaslight his own captives into transforming into ghouls.

Investigation/Using the Internet

Marcus' Internet presence vanishes three years ago. His Facebook, Twitter, and other accounts remain dead. The last posts on his Facebook wall are those of friends saying goodbye. There is no indication of any activity by Marcus himself since his disappearance. A Google search for 'Marcus Grey' brings up dated news stories and lists of unrelated websites relating to others named Marcus Grey. Two pictures of Marcus predominate Google Images (or similar): his yearbook photo and Facebook profile picture. Messaging Marcus has no effect: Marcus has no mobile phone, nor access to the Internet.

The news stories of Marcus' disappearance and remembrance are local briefs containing little detail. If the investigators search for other disappearances, they uncover news of Kevin Branch, a young student—and Haverman's first victim—who vanished from campus two years before Marcus. A search for Branch will bring up details of his disappearance from his dormitory and the discovery of his scarred body nearly 2 years later. Images of Branch online show a small, slim youth who bears little resemblance to Marcus, apart from their both having brown hair and deep-set eyes. All other Internet searches reveal no relevant information.

Lastly, if the investigators search for ABC Home Repairs (see **Talking to Campus Security,** below), they will find an outdated website providing home and mobile phone numbers for the service, but no names. A search for Haverman's phone prefix will provide the location of the suburb he lives in.

Talking to Marcus Grey's Family

This line of questioning is likely to end badly. Marcus' family—father Don, mother Grace, and sister Kelly—still grieve for him and have no knowledge of his return. Any suggestion that Marcus might be alive will be met with anger from Marcus' father and sister, and extreme emotional distress from his mother. Grace's reaction is particularly disturbing. Three years on, she has only just reconciled with her son's death. If the investigators assert Marcus is alive, Grace reacts quickly: first, showing a desperate, manic interest and then becoming suddenly violent when no real proof is offered. She will drive the investigators from her home (or immediate vicinity), cursing and berating them. This last reaction is so unsettling that Keepers might want to penalize the investigators with 0/1 **SAN** losses.

Investigating Ted Banks

Connecting Ted's death with Marcus' reappearance, the investigators might wisely look into the Banks' affairs. Being an orphan with no extended family, Ted Banks lived cheaply in a campus dormitory. His last roommate is Cameron Duffield, a senior studying Information Science. Duffield did not attend Banks' funeral, not due to malice but crippling shyness. That same shyness makes it difficult to get information out of him; however, he opens up if one of the investigators successfully makes a **Persuade** or **Charm** check.

The last time that Duffield saw Banks was the night before his death. Duffield remembers it well because Banks woke him up at 3am, banging on the dorm door, having apparently lost his keys, his jacket, and his mobile phone. This last fact might surprise the investigators who know that Banks' latest-generation phone was easily his most prized possession. Banks rushed to the dorm window. At the window, he froze and then announced that he needed to get to Campus Security. He grabbed a jacket off his desk chair and fled without saying anything, but he seemed very agitated. Duffield went back to sleep.

Duffield will reluctantly allow investigators to investigate Ted's things but will watch them suspiciously. A successful **Spot Hidden** roll reveals a crumpled ball of paper underneath Ted's desk by the dormitory window. It is a flyer advertising a 20% discount at 'The Red Door.' A Google search or a successful **INT** roll finds that The Red Door is an adult sex shop located on the edge of a rougher part of the city. If the investigators ask Duffield if the flyer belongs to him, he answers (truthfully) that he's never seen it before.

Talking to Campus Security

Getting useful information out of Campus Security requires serious persuasion. Anything beyond requests for directions or late night access to labs is met with resistance. Discussion of Ted Banks or Marcus Grey requires Hard **Persuade** or **Fast Talk** successes (or more depending on the Keeper's judgment). Security personnel have little useful information—and no record of Ted visiting them the night before his death—but they do have 5 years of CCTV footage in their database. They will proudly admit this, and relate that the police have a copy of it, but without an Extreme **Persuade** or **Fast Talk** (or perhaps **Charm**) success, they will not allow the investigators access to it.

If the investigators manage to gain access to the CCTV database, they can search for relevant dates to find footage of the following (in reverse order):

- Ted's arrival at his dormitory, but none of his departure.
- Marcus leaving the freshman party 3 years ago, obviously intoxicated.
- The college-aged investigator(s) arriving at the party with Ted and Marcus earlier that evening.
- With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll, an 'ABC Home Repairs' van arriving that same night, and every previous night (9pm–3am), for two weeks before the party, and parking. A grainy image of Haverman can only be seen leaving the van on the night of Marcus' disappearance. (If asked, Security quickly ascertains that ABC Home Repairs has never had a permit to work on campus.)

Talking to the Police

Without evidence of some wrongdoing, getting information out of the police requires an Extreme **Persuade** or **Fast Talk** roll. With proper evidence—either in Banks' death or Marcus'—the police will consider looking into things. Normal police procedure, however, takes time, and the investigators do not have time. If one or more of the investigators have been captured by Marcus, the police open a missing person case after 48 hours—or more immediately with a Hard **Persuade** success. Keepers might speed up this process if the investigators can offer additional evidence or a strong story.

The police have a copy of the CCTV from campus and, of course, city cameras. Without some evidence, gaining access to this is virtually impossible (Extreme **Persuade** or **Fast Talk** successes). However, if the investigators have gained the police's trust, a simple success suffices. If the investigators note the ABC Home Repairs van (a **Spot Hidden** success), the police (or a **Computer Use** check through public records databases) can trace the van's license plate to Haverman's address. A successful **Persuade** roll allows the investigators to join the police when they visit Haverman's home (which they must, as his phone is dead).

If the investigators found the Red Door flyer in Banks' dorm, they again might ask the police to intervene there as well.

Locations

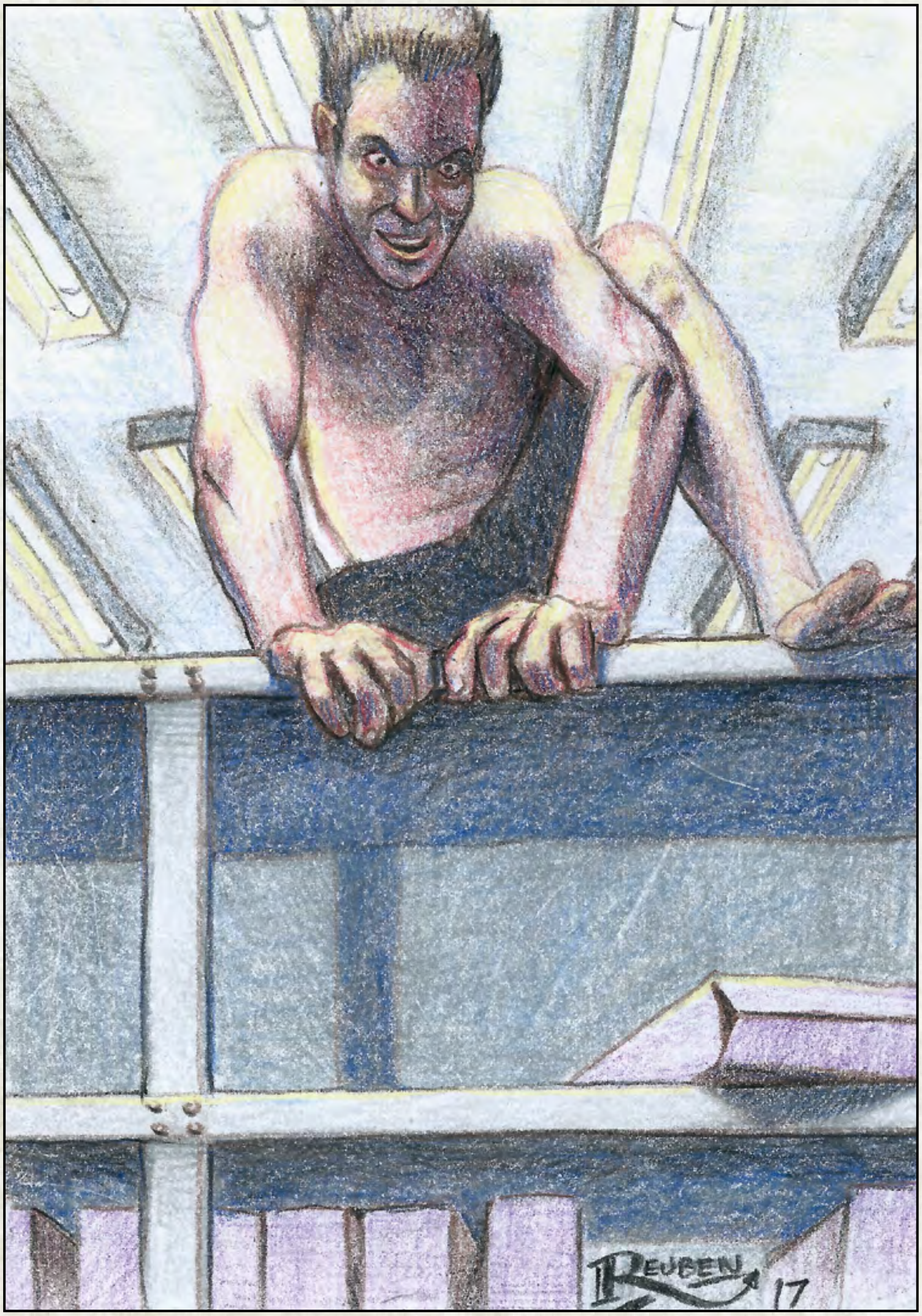
The three primary areas for investigation are listed below. Keep in mind that wherever possible, Keepers should use real and known locations.

Haverman's House

Haverman's bungalow with attached garage can be found in a cul-de-sac in a quiet suburb on the edge of the town/city. His ABC Home Repairs van is parked outside and appears to have sat idle for some time (the tires are starting to go flat). The garage is full of washing machines, dryers, and other home appliances, and little else. The bungalow, however, contains two gruesome surprises, namely Adam's decaying body—a kitchen knife in his back—and his basement dungeon. The house reeks and is full of flies and other insects, which have begun breaking down Haverman's body (0/1 **SAN** loss). The basement smells more strongly of stale urine and feces, and holds a "cage" cobbled together from wood, metal sheeting, and other bits, just barely large enough for a single human captive. A **Spot Hidden** success reveals clumps of Marcus' matted brown hair in the corner of the cage. A table near the stairs holds a box of memory cards, a video camera, and five ticking clocks. Viewing any of the abusive videos requires a **SAN** roll, resulting in a 1/1D6 loss, but also reveals that Haverman kept Marcus Grey captive for nearly 3 years. Earlier memory cards detail the torture and death of Kevin Branch.

The Red Door

Identified by its garishly painted door, the adult store is the only open shop in a disused strip mall. When the shop is open, a wooden stand outside advertises "daily deals" and holds a number of flyers—the same flyer as found in Banks' dorm



room. Inside, cheap bookcases filled with DVDs and Blu-rays line the walls, while adult toys take up the intervening space.

The store manager, Jim Bryson, is bored and garrulous. He will talk at length but knows nothing of Marcus or Ted. If the investigators want to look around, they will need a successful **Persuade**, **Intimidate**, or **Fast Talk** roll (or have the police at their side). The back room serves only as storage and lunchroom. Bryson's only real complaint is the noise from the "bums" who squat in the nearby, empty storefronts. Apart from that, little happens at the Red Door.

Marcus' Lair

Behind the strip mall, in one of the vacant units, a broken window leads into Marcus' lair. A **Track** success (or Hard **Spot Hidden**) reveals recent signs of entry. Inside, a small backroom is filled with black garbage bags and vermin droppings. A closed door leads out to the left. A successful **Climb** or Hard **DEX** roll will get investigators safely inside. A fail means a worrying cut (1D2 HP) and some torn clothing, as well as enough noise to alert Marcus that he has been located. The door is jammed (**STR** success to open), but an arc in the dust shows that it has been opened recently. Through the door, the interior of the former pet shop is dark, even in daylight, and the floor is riddled with broken cages, displays, and other detritus. This junk is Marcus' makeshift alarm system.

Without light, it is impossible to cross the space without making noise and potentially falling (successful **DEX** roll or suffer 1 HP of damage). Even with a light, moving quietly requires a **Stealth** roll success. A successful **Track** or **Spot Hidden** roll reveals another exit through a 4' high hole in the wall, behind a large Iams Pet Food sign. Unless the investigators specifically move the sign slowly, bells (on the various cat collars Marcus has affixed to the back of the sign) ring out.

Marcus' lair is finally accessed through this hole. The interior of the abandoned supermarket beyond is a dark maze—one that Marcus knows well. In the dark, the investigators are at a particular disadvantage. It is in this maze that Marcus is at his most dangerous. He can crawl under or over shelving, knock shelves down onto investigators, bludgeon them with cans of spoiled food, drop down upon them from rafters, or simply stab them. He has a dozen good hiding spots (behind counters, etc.) and can attack from cover.

Rather than a cage, he uses the supermarket's freezer, behind the deli counter, to contain his captives. Used boards and bars from nearby construction sites and ruined buildings create cells for up to three people in the freezer. Any captive investigators are found here.

Rewards and Repercussions

Marcus cannot be reasoned with and, unless the investigators can find a means of rendering him unconscious, he will fight to the death. Killing Marcus results in the loss of 1D6 **SAN** and will have a significant impact on the Grey family and the community. Safely capturing Marcus is a heroic result by comparison and results in a reward of 1D10 **SAN**. Sending the police to deal with Marcus has a 50/50 chance of leading to his death (1D3 **SAN** loss) or successful capture (1D4 **SAN** reward). Keepers should devise other rewards/penalties for specific outcomes.

MARCUS GREY, Friend Turned Fiend

STR 75	CON 70	SIZ 65	INT 45	POW 45
DEX 70	APP 50	EDU 55	SAN 0	HP 13

Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 9

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 65% (32/13), damage 1D3+db. Conceals a three-inch camping knife in his hoodie pocket, damage 1D4+db

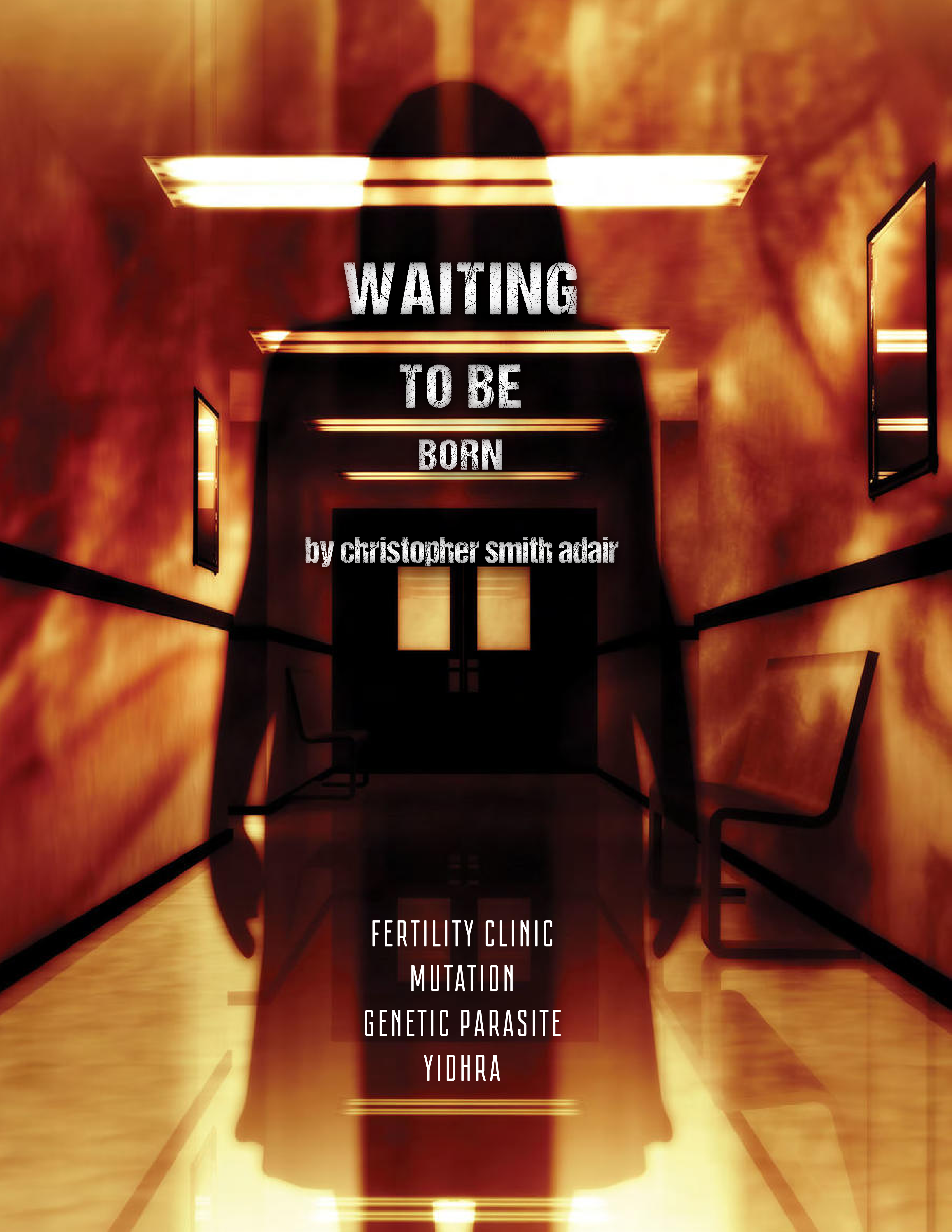
Dodge 60% (30/12)

Skills: Climb 30%, Cthulhu Mythos 05% (if transitioning to a ghoul), Dodge 60%, Intimidate 30%, Jump 40%, Language (English) 55%, Listen 35%, Locksmith 20%, Navigate 20%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 40%, Survival 20%, Swim 35%, Track 15%..

Nationality: American
Age: 22
Education: Started college
Spells: none.
Indefinite Insanity: Sadistic Psychopath
Notes: Marcus is thin but powerfully built. His body is covered in pronounced scars. His angular face is marked with parallel scars above and below each eye, giving him an animalistic look. His dark brown hair is unkempt and matted, and normally hid beneath the cowl of his hoodie. He wears a grey hoodie, black jeans, and worn, grey Nikes. Marcus does not bathe and smells terribly of stale sweat and body odor. As a psychopath, he does not understand, or care for, people any longer. He is quick to anger and avoids conversation. His outward appearance, smell, and aggressive attitude are enough to put off most. When observed from a distance, he moves with a strange, predatory ease, usually keeping to the shadows. Under his breath, he frequently murmurs 'Tick-tock, tick-tock,' owing to the sound of the clocks in the dungeon where he was driven mad. Lastly, when in battle, he taunts his prey with whispered plans—real and fictitious—for their torture.

WAITING
TO BE
BORN

by christopher smith adair



FERTILITY CLINIC
MUTATION
GENETIC PARASITE
YIDHRA

Introduction

IN 1995, DR. CELESTE ALMUNIA ESTABLISHED THE NEW LIFE FERTILITY CENTER IN THE CANYON LAKE, TEXAS AREA, FIFTY MILES NORTH OF SAN ANTONIO, OSTENSIBLY TO FURTHER "HOLISTIC" SOLUTIONS FOR INFERTILE COUPLES. THE CLINIC'S HISTORICAL PURPOSE IS TO SERVE YIDHRA, BUT THIS HAS RECENTLY FALLEN BY THE WAYSIDE.

Most communities devoted to Yidhra are insular and seek to keep their genetic stock "pure." Not so the Central Texas families, who serve an avatar named Regora. Their roots lie in Spain, and the Roman and Moorish conquests resulted in genetic diversification that they came to value. After immigrating to Spanish Texas, the current cultists' ancestors intermarried with local tribes. The era of the empresarios brought in a variety of U.S., European, and Mexican settlers. The Yidhra worshippers thus had access to a large gene pool while still mostly keeping to themselves. As knowledge of heredity and biology advanced, some members of the cult went into the scientific and medical fields.

Dr. Almunia has further perverted the clinic's purpose. Not content to gain a form of immortality by "coming to Yidhra" and being absorbed by her goddess when the time comes, she seeks to become a goddess herself. Combining her esoteric and mundane expertise, she has successfully cloned herself. This clone had all of Almunia's memories at the time of creation, and the two share newer memories when having sex. This sex has also led to procreation—an attempt to begin their own cycle of rebirth. When one becomes pregnant, for the next three months, she hides away while the other takes the public role.

Dr. Almunia is keeping a torpid, passive Regora in a hidden sublevel of her clinic, using her to further her own vision of prospective immortality. Regora wishes to awaken and take corrective action against Dr. Alumnia, but needs help to shake off her torpor. The investigators are caught in the middle.

Involving the Investigators

This can be run in a traditional fashion: the investigators are asked to look into the clinic after the sudden death of Wayne and Dolores Brinkman's infant son, born through IVF (in vitro fertilization). They blame the clinic and are looking into potential legal action, although it appears to simply be a case of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome). The baby seemed healthy and normal in life to everyone but the Brinkmans, who felt that Jake was somehow "wrong." Dolores had nightmares about Jake not being human, starting during her pregnancy.

Alternatively, one or more of the investigators may be at the clinic for male or female fertility treatment or study. Such an investigator is asked to stay overnight for extensive tests and wakes up alone in the underground patient rooms during the storm. Another option is that one or more are homeless kidnapping victims.

Jake Brinkman

Authorization from the parents (or a **Law** roll) provides access to reports on Jake Brinkman's death. Coroner's tests have been inconclusive. No DNA test has been conducted, but one could be done on a blood sample. With a successful **Science (Biology)**, **Science (Forensics)**, or **Medicine** roll, the test confirms the Brinkmans as the parents, but there is foreign DNA as well—avian, reptilian, and plant. Either gene splicing was conducted or the sample is tainted somehow (the authorities latch onto the second explanation). This news, if shared with the Brinkmans, sends them into a frenzy and encourages them to go to great lengths to "bring down" the clinic.

New Life Fertility Center

The clinic is successful and well-regarded. Dr. Almunia, a gifted researcher, has been offered lucrative positions elsewhere, which she has declined. Brochures and a website trumpet childbirth and family in quasi-religious, "holistic," terms.

The public staff consists of Almunia, Dr. Adam Higgins, and nurses James Fitzhugh and Debbie Lehman. Almunia increasingly stays overnight rather than in her suite in San Antonio ("sleeping in her office," but really downstairs), although outsiders haven't noticed.

Someone on a stakeout can also eventually map the morning and evening shift changes for the downstairs (plainclothes) guards, as they drive in and out, and take advantage of them to slip in during a shift change. If Almunia feels threatened, she holes up, and four to six reinforcements arrive from the surrounding area to help guard the underground facility.

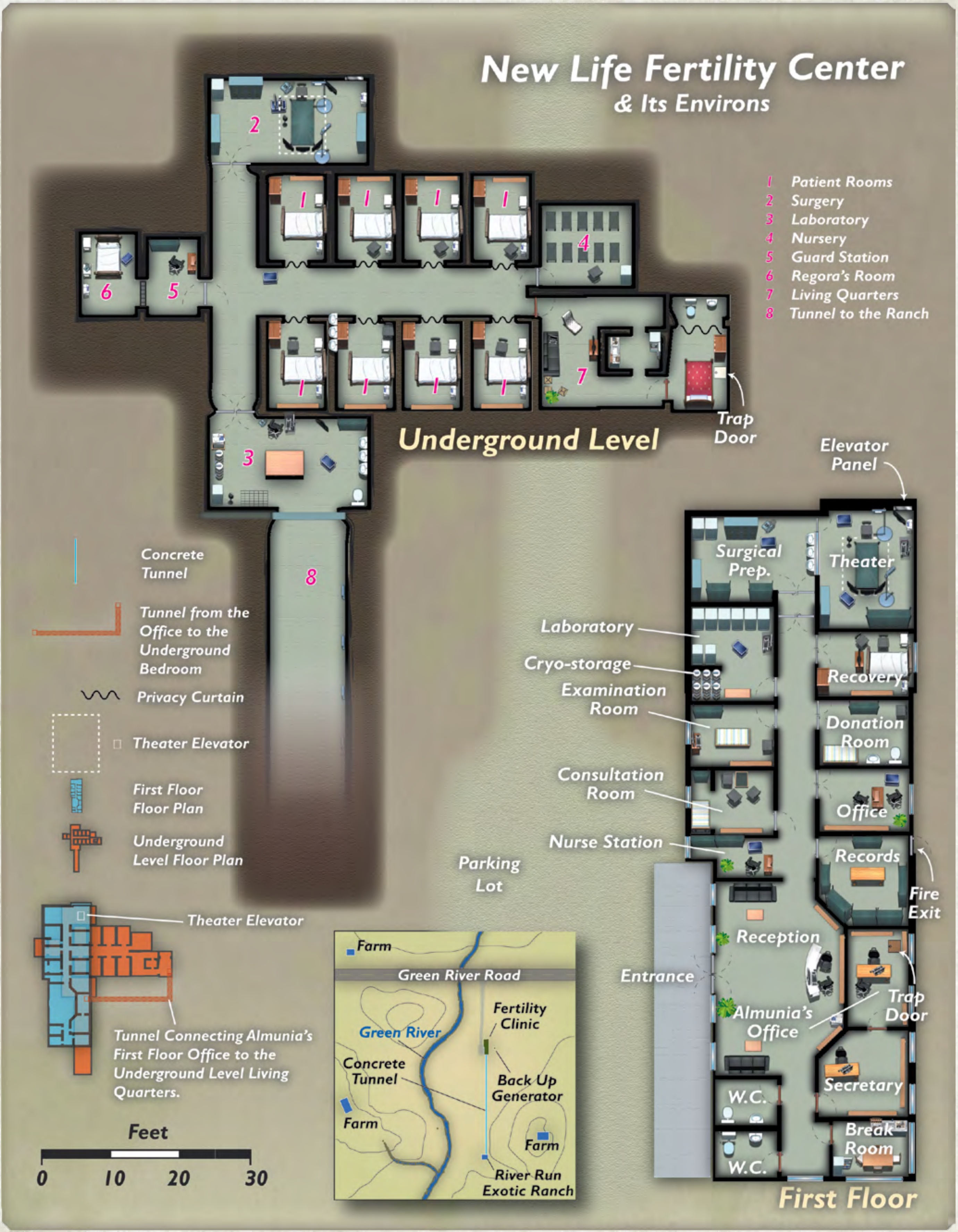
The Facility

The clinic is on Green River Road. Aside from the adjacent River Run Exotic Ranch, there are farms and ranches scattered through the low hills that the road winds through. The clinic is 400 feet from the road; the ten-acre property is surrounded by a high fence (Hard **Climb** roll to scale). The grounds are covered in native plants.

Cameras

With a successful **Spot Hidden** roll or specifically looking for them, investigators note subtle cameras in the facility (Hard **Stealth** to avoid; **Electronics** to disable, but that eventually gets noticed). A successful **Electronics**, **Electrical Repair**, or a Hard **INT** roll notes that the cameras are wired to somewhere underground. Regora can put the downstairs guard to sleep momentarily (and will since she is of a mind to punish Almunia), so the investigators have an easier time penetrating the facility than they realize.

Overall, the upstairs of the clinic appears to be pleasant and normal enough (reception area, doctors' offices, nurses' station, consultation room, records, sperm donation room, cryostorage, examination rooms, labs, operating theater,


New Life Fertility Center
& Its Environs
1 Patient Rooms
2 Surgery
3 Laboratory
4 Nursery
5 Guard Station
6 Regora's Room
7 Living Quarters
8 Tunnel to the Ranch
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
Underground Level
Trap Door
Elevator Panel
Concrete Tunnel
Tunnel from the Office to the Underground Bedroom
Privacy Curtain
Theater Elevator
First Floor Floor Plan
Underground Level Floor Plan
Theater Elevator
Tunnel Connecting Almunia's First Floor Office to the Underground Level Living Quarters.
Feet
0
10
20
30
Surgical Prep.
Theater
Laboratory
Cryo-storage
Recovery
Examination Room
Donation Room
Consultation Room
Office
Nurse Station
Records
Fire Exit
Parking Lot
Reception
Entrance
Trap Door
Almunia's Office
Secretary
W.C.
W.C.
Break Room
First Floor
Farm
Green River Road
Fertility Clinic
Green River
Concrete Tunnel
Back Up Generator
Farm
Farm
River Run Exotic Ranch

recovery area, break room). Eggs, sperm, and embryos are stored together in cryostorage. There are far fewer of these stored than would be expected for a busy, acclaimed facility (Hard **INT** or **Medicine** check to note). Cross-referencing this observation with the clinic's computer records (**Computer Use** to hack) shows that 75% of the collected biological material is unaccounted for.

In the operating theater, there is a secret panel with elevator-style up and down buttons (**Spot Hidden** or thorough search to find). This controls access to the underground surgical theater, lowering and raising the bed along with anyone standing next to it.

In Almunia's office, a trapdoor is hidden in the tile floor, covering a staircase to her bedroom (**Spot Hidden** to find).

"Nothing to See Here"

Investigators who aren't inclined to break into the underground facility may be contacted by Regora. As the storm rolls in, they hear a muffled voice from below call, "Help me…."

Underground Facility

There are three ways in and out of the underground part of the facility; the lift in the operating theater, the trapdoor in Almunia's office, and the tunnel to River Run Exotic Ranch. All rooms, except the living quarters and the hallways, have cameras.

1. Patient Rooms

These often empty rooms appear as standard hospital rooms, but without TVs or windows. The beds have nylon arm and leg restraints hanging from them. The medicine cabinets in them have several bottles of Diprivan, along with injection needles. A successful **Science (Pharmacy)**, **Medicine**, or an Internet search identifies Diprivan as an anesthetic that rapidly causes deep sleep. There are no known side effects to unborn children.

Many patients in the underground part of the facility are Yidhra followers staying here voluntarily. Others are regular patients, identified as particularly interesting genetically during screenings, brought down for more elaborate procedures—these usually only take slightly longer than above board ones, with the subject and family being none the wiser. Sometimes, the patient is convinced that they need to stay overnight for extensive testing. Occasionally, runaways and other homeless people are subjected to lethally invasive studies; the restraints are for them, as a backup to Diprivan. If any investigators are captured during an infiltration, they are drugged and restrained here.

2. Surgery

This appears much like the one upstairs, though the variety of surgical instruments here—bone saws, drills, etc.—is far beyond the needs of a fertility clinic. The lift buttons are obvious.

3. Laboratory

The hidden laboratory includes high-tech equipment that a successful **Science (Biology)** or Hard **Know** roll notes is worthy of a dedicated biomedical or biotech facility, capable of deeply analyzing and working with DNA (including duplicating it). Shelves covering one wall hold dozens of liquid-nitrogen tanks containing eggs, sperm, embryos, and embryonic stem cells—much more than accounted for in the records upstairs (the stem cells, legal with FDA approval but controversial, aren't public record). A refrigerator stores hundreds of tubes of plasmid DNA samples. There's a steel tub with jugs of potassium hydroxide and water beside it (for dissolving remains). The back wall holds a rolling steel door (SIZ 200) with an electronic lock (**Electronics** to break), that opens to the tunnel to the ranch.

Lab Laptop

The laptop is unconnected to the Internet. It can be accessed with a successful **Computer Use** roll or by typing "password." On this poorly secured laptop can be found:

- Extensive studies and experiments are being conducted on genetic material from human, animal, and plant sources, both in isolation and in combination with other DNA.
- There are detailed records and analyses of subjects' genetics and background (genealogy, health records, etc.) going beyond what most subjects could provide (**INT** check to realize, or obvious to subject investigators seeing their own invasive details).
- Genetics are analyzed for positive, negative, and neutral traits (disease resistance and susceptibility, defects, psychological strengths and weaknesses, hair type, facial structure, height, etc.). Some experiments foster positive traits, but others encourage negative or seemingly unimportant ones. There's almost a reverence for genetic variety.
- Animal experimentation takes place here, but these subjects aren't kept here long-term. There are references to animals, many of them exotic, "visiting" or volunteering themselves.
- Genetic material is brought here, manipulated, and then returned to storage upstairs, ready to be used on unsuspecting patients.
- They plan to collect, analyze, and use genetic material from the patients' descendants, though how they'll have access to future generations is unstated.

4. Nursery

This warm room contains ten maternity-ward-style cribs, six of them occupied by female babies and toddlers ranging from newborn to 18 months old. Infants cry when someone enters and there is a canine quality to one mighty wail. There is a refrigerator stocked with baby bottles of milk (human but with foreign DNA if analyzed with **Medicine**, **Science (Biology)**, or **Science (Forensics)**).

The babies share a family resemblance. The three oldest exhibit deformities (0/1D6 **SAN**). A cluster of smaller eyes has erupted around the original pair on one; less easily discovered are microscopic hairs on her hands and feet that allow her to climb like a spider. Another's bones have softened so much that she pools in her crib. The last lies in a basin filled with salt water inside her crib, since she can only breathe oxygen for short periods.

5. Guard Station

A guard stays at a desk in this small room most of the time, occasionally glancing at the camera monitor. Behind him is an electronically locked steel door (SIZ 250), requiring a successful **Electronics** roll to bypass, or a keycard (the Almunias have them). Investigators who don't immediately break in may hear a soft "Help me…."

6. Regora's Room

The door opens on an unlit hospital room—someone's in bed, and the whirr of an infusion pump can be heard. Investigating further reveals that the bed holds a naked, hairless, and hugely pregnant woman, with flesh like translucent glass, revealing her inner anatomy. Within her belly, countless luminous protozoan shapes swim, breeding and feasting. An IV tube connects to her left arm, pumping a yellow-brown liquid (**Medicine**, **Science (Biology)**, or **Science (Forensics)**) can determine it's a solution of ribozymes and DNA); a capped catheter is in her right (while this could hold another tube, a successful **Medicine** or **Know** roll notes that it is probably used for frequent blood draws). She mutters unintelligibly; her open eyes dart in REM sleep. This is the bound Regora, intravenously fed on genetic material and providing her own via her blood. Seeing her eerily beautiful form costs 1/1D10 **Sanity** points.

A battery-operated drill with a needle-thin, diamond-tipped bit lies on a side table. Activated, it causes 1D4+2 damage.

Waking or Destroying Regora

She only awakens in response to a threat, including being hit or forcibly shaken. It takes 1D4 rounds for her to become conscious. Newly awakened, she is unable to move, but she sends out waves in a three-hundred-foot radius that break down organisms. Anyone who shares genetic material with her (her followers and any subjects) takes 2D6 damage each round. Anyone else takes 1D8 on a failed **CON** roll. Those killed are reduced to a slurry that flows into her open mouth (1/1D6 **SAN** on first witnessing).

Her current body only dies if subjected to extreme damage, such as explosives, being pierced with a diamond-tipped drill bit, or being set on fire. Piercing her vitals with the diamond-tipped drill bit takes 1D3+1 rounds. Destroyed, her shell collapses and her innards liquesce. Within a month, someone who shares genetic material with her is compelled to journey to a sacred grotto and give birth to a new Regora.

7. Living Quarters

The Almunias (original and clone) live in these tasteful, comfortable rooms. Almunia's key card for Regora's door is on the coffee table. The trapdoor's stairs are in the bedroom. There's normally a journal on a nightstand (Almunia could leave it anywhere that the Keeper desires, though):

- It summarizes the laboratory laptop's information without the records and analysis.
- "Beyond female and male now—switch between sex roles as necessary—to be pregnant—to impregnate. But neither of my bodies realizes my full potential. Old saying/new meaning: live on through our children."
- None of her daughters, so far, have been viable. After a few months, their foreign DNA mutates catastrophically and they soon die. Her tone is detached, but she is anxious to give birth to a suitable "candidate" before someone named "Regora the Provider" awakens. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recognizes the name as a passive, statue-like, but dangerous avatar of Yidhra.

8. Tunnel

One hall extends on, becoming a 1,000-foot-long concrete tunnel with lights running along the ceiling. There are occasional animal droppings on the ground. It ends in a basement below River Run Exotic Ranch's animal pens.

Regora's Wrath

Regora, long content to sleep, and provide and be provided for, has finally felt Almunia's growing power. She is unable to simply wake herself up, however. When the time is right to create chaos for her wayward followers (such as when investigators raid the underground facility), she manipulates the area's weather, turning a sudden storm into a torrent. Water rushes down the hills and overflows the creeks and rivers, causing flooding and a power outage. The upstairs floods and water begins leaking underground. Any sedated investigators in the patient rooms startle fully awake upon hearing a voice whisper, "Wake up!" They're wearing hospital clothes, and their belongings are missing (they're either upstairs or stored in the guard station).

Backup generators kick in but Regora interferes, hindering her captors and keeping her potential rescuers here. The electronic lock on the lab's rolling door fails, locking it in place. The flood has disabled the lift. The door to Regora's room works intermittently (the lock is disabled whenever a follower tries the door, but operates when an investigator tries **Electronics** or a key card). The backup power for local cell phone towers operates for a few hours, but anyone using a cell phone underground is probably out of luck at the best of times. Upstairs, reception is fine and the landlines there work. But while the storm is in full force, rescue by road or air is impossible. Authorities could possibly get a boat over there if convinced the situation requires immediate action (probably with an appropriate social skill roll).

Any followers upstairs go downstairs as soon as possible. Even with water around their ankles, being underground seems safer than in the thick of it—and they want to protect Regora. The pregnant Almunia stays in bed. The non-pregnant Almunia may be in the living quarters as well, or checking on things. She could also be grabbing the laptop or getting the youngest (and hopefully viable) infant. The guard mostly stays put but investigates disturbances. The guard may be called into the surgery room to assist with an uncharacteristically aggressive animal; the investigators could find a dead ostrich on top of a dead guard with a discharged pistol. The infants in the nursery become agitated. The spidery one may figure out how to get out and scuttle along the ceiling; the blobby one may flow out. They're no threat, but the investigators don't know that.

Escaping

Regora prefers to be rescued through the tunnel, since she can control the park's animals—she'll reactivate and unlock the lock. Investigators who take her through end up in the animal pens, many of which stand open. Animals gather calmly, licking and nuzzling Regora (0/1D4 **SAN**). Two mutilated attendants are in the corner (1/1D3 **SAN**). Investigators may leave via other exits: opening Almunia's trapdoor unleashes water (1D6 damage on a failed **DEX** roll); or Regora could unlock the rolling door. Once up top, they can climb onto a roof. The investigators drift off to sleep and wake to rescue—Regora is gone.

Rewards and Repercussions

Investigators defeating the Almunias gain 1D6 **SAN**. Investigators who suspect Regora's nature and destroy her gain 1D10 **SAN**, but lose 1D10 **SAN** if they set her free.

CELESTE ALMUNIA

STR 70	CON 90	SIZ 60	INT 90	POW 80
DEX 50	APP 60	EDU 98	SAN 0	HP 15

Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+db

Dodge 25% (12/5)

Skills: Credit Rating 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 40%, First Aid 50%, Language (English) 98%, Language (Latin) 50%, Language (Spanish) 75%, Medicine 80%, Science (Biology) 95%.
Defenses: none above base.
Nationality: American
Age: 55
Education: Doctor of Medicine
Spells: Flesh Ward, Wither Limb
Sanity Loss: None normally, but seeing her unclothed body's riot of animal traits costs 0/1D6.
Indefinite Insanity: Sociopath
Notes: These stats are for both Almunias (the pregnant one's Move is 3). Wears concealing clothes and glasses, and brown hair in a bun.

FOLLOWERS OF REGORA

STR 75	CON 60	SIZ 60	INT 50	POW 50
DEX 55	APP 55	EDU 60	SAN 0	HP 12

Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+db. Dr. Higgins and the nurses can use handy medical implements (damage 1D4+db).

Firearms (Handgun) 35% (17/7), or Firearms (Rifle/Shotgun) 40% (20/8). Guards have .38 automatics: 1 or 3/round, 1D10, 15 yards, malfunction 99, capacity 8. Reinforcements have whatever Keepers desire.

Dodge 27% (13/5)

Skills: Language (English) 60%, Language (Spanish) 40%, Natural World 50%.
Defenses: none above base.
Nationality: American
Age: Varies
Education: High school or medical school
Spells: none.
Sanity Loss: None normally, but particularly animalistic ones cost 0/1D6.
Indefinite Insanity: Fanatics
Notes: Loyal to Almunia and Regora, but don't realize that conflict of interest. Increase EDU to 90 for Dr. Higgins and 70 for nurses. Add Medicine 70% and Science (Biology) 75% for Dr. Higgins; add First Aid 70% and Science (Pharmacy) 50% for nurses.

UNLAND

by scott dorward

ABANDONED FUN FAIR

THE PHANTOM OF TRUTH

DIMENSIONAL POCKET

SACRIFICE

Introduction

The Funland amusement park closed down 18 years ago, following a scandal involving a pedophile park employee who used his position to stalk and murder children. Ina Matthews handled the public relations for Funland and was driven insane by the pressure of the lies that she told to protect the business. Both the unpleasant history of Funland and Ms. Matthews frequent quotes attempting to deflect from the corporate owners' responsibility are easily found on the Internet.

What is not publicly known is that, in the aftermath, she embraced the worship of The Phantom of Truth, seeing it as a means to strip away the lies that corrupt the world.

Matthews has since turned the abandoned Funland park into a temple to uncomfortable truths, using it to help people abandon their own lies, and luring in those she believes need her "help." Some of those she has changed see it as beneficial and, once having left the park, now help her to lure in others.

Those who enter UNLAND (the 'F' fell from the sign years ago) must either surrender a vital part of themselves to escape, or find a way of breaking the The Phantom of Truth's hold on the park. Either approach carries a grave risk of madness.

UNLAND is set in England, but can be relocated anywhere that abandoned amusement parks are found.

Involving the Investigators

Options include:

- Someone whom the investigators know has been lured into UNLAND by a friend and is still lost there.
- Someone the investigators trust has returned from UNLAND, now a convert, and lures them there to "help" them.
- Now insane, someone that the investigators know wants them to retrieve something important they left behind (their Remnant, although they can't articulate what it is that they left behind). They seem somewhat confused and somewhat amnesiac, but insist that whatever it was, was extremely important.
- The investigators are sent to UNLAND to clear out vagrants before a proposed redevelopment. (This is possibly a ruse orchestrated by a convert for the investigators' "benefit.")

Approaching UNLAND

The park is located a half a mile down an overgrown and cracked private road, with no directing signage, behind a gate with no lock. A **Spot Hidden** roll reveals fresh tire tracks in the mud and weeds. The surrounding area is permanently foggy, the grey mist growing thicker closer to the park. The private road leads to an unmaintained, weed-choked parking lot, where vehicles of varying ages have been abandoned. Some are no more than rusted wrecks.

The park is 30 acres in size, surrounded by a tall metal fence topped with barbed wire. The latticed struts of a rollercoaster (Mister Fun's Big Twister) line the inside of the fence all the way around. The front gates connect to the parking lot; they have a chain looped through them but are unlocked. The metal arch over the gate is topped by large, rusted metal letters reading "UNLAND." There is no sign of the missing "F."

A large fiberglass clown head that once topped the sign now lies on the ground, cracked open. The inside is strangely dark, even when examined with a direct light. Looking at it long enough, one experiences a profound sense of déjà vu, vividly recalling and regretting the worst lie that he has ever told. The consequences of this lie (even if previously unknown) suddenly strike home, accompanied by a strange sense of helplessness, as though one was a puppet on a string. A successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll recalls certain descriptions of the entity known as The Phantom of Truth.

The grey fog surrounding UNLAND grows even denser inside the park, where visibility is limited to a few yards. It is eerily quiet. All of the rides within the park are rusted and unstable after many years of exposure to the elements, and many of them have collapsed. The shapes that they make in the fog are strange and unnatural, almost like Rorschach blots.

There is no electricity in UNLAND, so none of the indoor areas are lit. Investigators may use their phones (or flashlights, if especially well-prepared) for illumination. Keepers may wish to call for **Luck** rolls at tense moments to determine how much of a charge people's phones have left.

As UNLAND exists outside the material world, there is no normal mobile phone signal available. Calls placed from within UNLAND may randomly cross space and time, be answered by someone that the investigator has forgotten, or reveal some secret that they would prefer to have forgotten.

Anyone entering UNLAND will be unable to exit again, becoming constantly turned around in the fog, unless they: create a Remnant out of their lies (see section titled **The Mirrors**); convince Ina Matthews to lead them out; or destroy the icon of The Phantom of Truth in the Tunnel of Love. Once inside, there is no sign of the gate through which the investigators entered; the myriad, Escher-figure string-like struts of Mr. Fun's Big Twister (see below) take its place.

No one can die while in UNLAND. They merely become incapacitated for 1D6 rounds upon reaching 0 hit points. Every person or Remnant in UNLAND regenerates 1 HP every minute.

Mister Fun's Big Twister

What looks like the creaking remains of a huge, rusting rollercoaster from the outside appears quite different within UNLAND. There is no sign of the rails, which must be high up above, invisible in the fog, and there is nowhere to board the roller coaster. The struts form a dense mesh, almost like a curtain of strings, at the ends of which dim, vague shapes twitch and dance. They circle the entire perimeter of the park without a break.

The gaps between the stings are thick with mist and anyone looking into them sees hints of eyes watching (**SAN** loss is 0/1D3). An agile investigator may be able to clamber through the strings. The Keeper should offer the investigator a few chances to double back, describing how the curtain is drawing tighter, and how the figures at the end of the strings are coming into clearer view, and seem to be human. The sense of being watched from the gaps between is overwhelming. If the investigator persists, they find themselves lost forever within the snare of The Phantom of Truth, at the end of marionette's controls, dancing and twitching and spouting secrets best never known. This provokes a **SAN** roll (1D10/1D100), but that will be the least of the investigator's troubles.

The Mirrors

There are dozens of mirrors of all shapes and sizes dotted around UNLAND. Some come from the Hall of Mirrors; others are normal household or department store mirrors. Roll 1D10x10 to determine the **SIZ** of a random mirror. Each mirror contains 1D3-1 Remnants, which (if any are present) can be seen moving around in the reflection. If a mirror is broken, any Remnants within are released, clambering out of the frame, squeezing through impossibly small spaces if necessary. The Keeper should look for opportunities for mirrors to get broken accidentally.

Remnants are the distillation of the lies that people tell themselves, removed from the body into mirrors dedicated to The Phantom of Truth. They are grey, spongy humanoid shapes with ill-defined features. Remnants move awkwardly, as if their joints are at strange angles; they lope when running, leaving behind trails of grey mist.

If a Remnant escapes a broken mirror, it tries to grab the nearest person and merge with them. If this succeeds, the investigator loses 1/1D8 **SAN** as a rush of someone else's worst memories fills their head. The Keeper should choose memories based on lies, whether self-delusions over horrible actions or other forms of cruelty or neglect. It is hard to tell which memories are the investigator's, and which belong to the Remnant. The Keeper should treat these memories like delusions.

The player should then roll 1D4:

1. The investigator gains a random phobia originally belonging to the Remnant (Keeper's choice).

2. The investigator gains a random mania originally belonging to the Remnant (Keeper's choice).

3. The Remnant's personality takes over the investigator's body whenever they sleep.

4. The investigator takes on the physical form of the person whose Remnant they merged with (**SAN** 1/1D8). The Keeper chooses this form.

To create a Remnant, an investigator must look into one of the mirrors for at least 30 seconds while thinking about the lies that shaped their life, and then make a **POW** roll (this may be pushed, risking a doubling of all effects if the second **POW** roll is failed. The Remnant is created either way). If this succeeds, observers see darkness flowing from the investigator's body, into the mirror, forming a grey mass resembling the investigator. Witnessing this provokes a **SAN** roll (0/1D6).

The investigator creating the Remnant must make a **SAN** roll (1D6/1D20) as something essential is pulled from their body and mind. This is traumatic, even though the memories lost are unpleasant, and the investigator will always know they have lost an important part of themselves. They also lose 2D10 **POW**. Finally, the investigator should roll 1D4 on the following table:

1. The investigator forgets all people, locations, and events associated with a backstory entry of the Keeper's choice; there must have been lies connected with it. Encountering evidence of what the investigator has forgotten provokes a **SAN** roll (0/1D6).

2. Mirrors now show the investigator the true nature of reality as revealed by The Phantom of Truth, provoking a **SAN** roll (0/1D6) every time that they look in one.

3. There is nothing but truth left inside the investigator. They must make a **SAN** roll (0/1D6) whenever they lie.

4. People now look like Remnants to the investigator; 0/1D6 **SAN** every time that they see someone new.

This process will not remove a merged Remnant from an investigator; the lies they have taken on are not their own, and The Phantom of Truth will not remove them.

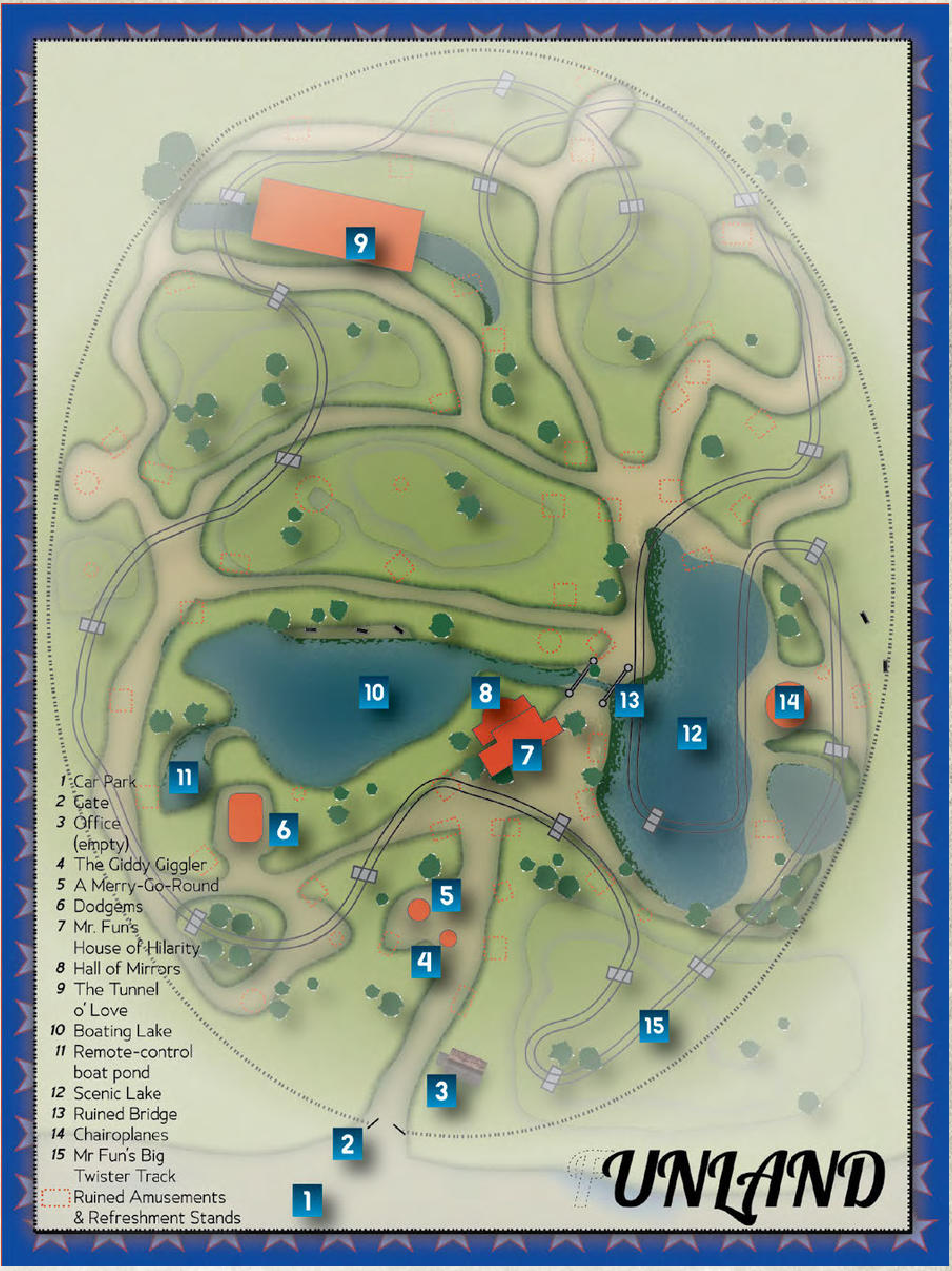
Once an investigator has created a Remnant, the main entrance to UNLAND will be visible to them again, and they may leave. They cannot lead anyone else out, however.

The Giddy Giggler

This waltzer is located near the entrance. Clown faces are molded and painted onto the cars. The eyes have been scratched off of each face.

Merry-Go-Round

This ride has collapsed and the remains of wooden horses litter the ground, eyes all gouged out. Mirrors of varying sizes hang from the metal poles that used to support the horses; grey shapes move within.


1 Car Park
2 Gate
3 Office (empty)
4 The Giddy Giggler
5 A Merry-Go-Round
6 Dodgems
7 Mr. Fun's House of Hilarity
8 Hall of Mirrors
9 The Tunnel o' Love
10 Boating Lake
11 Remote-control boat pond
12 Scenic Lake
13 Ruined Bridge
14 Chairoplanes
15 Mr Fun's Big Twister Track
⬚ Ruined Amusements & Refreshment Stands
UNLAND

Chairoplanes

The central metal column of the ride tilts at a wild angle. Most of the seats have broken off, leaving rusty chains dangling uselessly. The form of a young woman, Safiya Ali, hangs by the neck from one of the chains. Her legs twitch weakly. Having seen the maddening effects that creating a Remnant had on others, Ali tried to kill herself over a week ago and has been hanging here since, unable to die. If the investigators rescue her, she slips in and out of delirium, mind broken by her ordeal. Her larynx is crushed and she has difficulty speaking. A **Psychoanalysis** or a Hard **Intimidate** roll may snap Safiya out of her fugue state, and she can lead the investigators to Ina Matthews if they ask her how to leave the park.

Dodgems

Rusted dodgem cars litter the floor, half of them buried by a collapsed roof. In the far corner, Barry Walsh has started a fire in one of the cars, trying to get warm. He is angry, frightened, and irrational, believing that anyone he meets knows what is going on and won't tell him. Wielding a broken metal pole, Walsh tries to force the investigators into taking him out of the park.

Mr. Fun's House of Hilarity

Once painted in garish colors, this funhouse now looks faded and derelict. The facade is a giant clown face, his mouth the entrance. This leads through a moldering maze of trampolines (all torn and rotted to shreds), slides (jagged with rusted metal), ball pits (home to many rats) and rubber rooms. The Keeper should call for **Jump**, **Climb** and **DEX** rolls to pass through safely.

The funhouse ends in the Hall of Mirrors. While some are broken or missing, there are still dozens of mirrors here, angled to confuse any sense of direction. Remnants move in most of them, pawing at the inside of the glass.

It is possible to enter the Hall directly by forcing the exit doors, which are designed to only open outward, with a **STR** or **Mechanical Repair** roll.

The Tunnel of Love

The canal running through the tunnel is filthy, rats moving in the malodorous, stagnant water. Greying swan-headed gondolas float loose and may be rowed inside the tunnel. There is also a fire exit that leads to an internal alcove, although Matthews keeps this locked at all times. Walking along the narrow, slippery walkway from the fire exit to the icon of The Phantom of Truth requires a Hard **DEX** roll to avoid falling into the disease-ridden water.

Ina Matthews spends much of her time in the Tunnel of Love, contemplating the icon. She makes occasional passes through the park, looking for new arrivals (although the Keeper should avoid introducing her until the investigators have passed through the whole park). When she finally meets the investigators, she tries to convince them to enter the Hall of Mirrors and shed their lies there. This, she tells them, will set them free. She never forces anyone to take her help, believing that the sacrifice has to be voluntary.

It is important to note that Matthews sees her role and that of UNLAND as entirely positive. She is trying to help people, the investigators included. Her madness keeps her from seeing that she is destroying lives and minds. She sells her actions to the investigators as healing, freeing them of the lies that have corrupted their lives.

Inside of The Tunnel of Love, frescoes and dioramas of hearts, flowers and cherubs are now mound-encrusted nightmares, encrusted with pigeon excrement. At the crook of a bend halfway through, a diorama has been cleared away and replaced by an unsettling arrangement of marionette controls and strings, around ten feet cubed. This is an icon of The Phantom of Truth, constructed by Ina Matthews, and is the living heart of UNLAND.

For every round that someone can see the icon, they must make a **POW** roll. If failed, the icon appears to grow, especially in peripheral vision. Each failed roll provokes an increasingly harsh **SAN** roll: 0/1D6, 1/1D8, 1D3/1D10, 1D6/1D20, and finally 1D10/1D100. An investigator gazing on the icon sees the icon grow larger and more jumbled, making it hard to judge distances and dimensions. The eyes in the gaps between become ever more visible. The investigator starts to perceive their form and those of others as resembling Remnants. Unless the investigator leaves or destroys the icon, it will consume them after the 1D10/1D100 **SAN** roll, leaving them trapped within the icon of The Phantom of Truth.

Dismantling the icon before this happens requires a Hard **Mechanical Repair** roll, taking 1D4 rounds. Smashing the icon requires the investigators to inflict a total of 50 points of damage. It is too damp in the tunnel for fire to be a threat.

If Matthews is present, she will oppose any attempt to defile her temple. She is neither disposed to nor skilled in violence, so her opposition will mostly involve pleading and imposing herself between the investigators and the icon. Canny investigators may use the threat of desecration to convince Matthews to release them from UNLAND.

While Matthews will never voluntarily take the investigators into the Tunnel of Love, or explain what lies within, stealthy investigators may follow her as she makes one of her regular devotional visits. Failing that, Walsh or Ali may be able to lead the investigators there, depending on how the investigators treat them.

Rewards and Repercussions

Destroying the icon of The Phantom of Truth, thus returning UNLAND to the real world, results in an award of 1D10 **SAN**. Rescuing Safiya Ali or Barry Walsh gains 1D4 **SAN** each.

The Keeper may wish to narrate a coda from the perspective of any Remnants created by the investigators, watching as their bodies leave them behind, trapped forever behind cold glass.

INA MATTHEWS, Confessor of The Phantom of Truth

STR 50 CON 65 SIZ 55 INT 65 POW 90
DEX 65 APP 50 EDU 70 SAN 0 HP 12
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 25% (12/5), damage 1D3+db

Dodge 32% (16/6)

Skills: Credit Rating 01%, Cthulhu Mythos 45%, Language (English) 70%, Listen 50%, Persuade 60%, Psychology 70%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%.

Defenses: Regenerates 1 hit point every minute. Knocked out for 1D6 rounds if taken to 0 HP. Cannot be killed while the icon of The Phantom of Truth stands.

Nationality: British
Age: 38
Education: Bachelor's of Science in Psychology
Spells: none.

Indefinite Insanity: Wants to strip away the lies of the world. Never tells a direct lie, although she sometimes avoids telling the whole truth.

Notes: A thin, angular woman with long, greying blonde hair. She has grey-green eyes and stares intensely at whoever she speaks to. She wears an expensive-but-tattered grey skirt suit and the remains of once-fashionable shoes.

BARRY WALSH, Lost Soul

STR 65 CON 60 SIZ 70 INT 60 POW 30
DEX 55 APP 40 EDU 50 SAN 30 HP 13
Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 6

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10), damage 1D3+db

Dodge 40% (20/8)

Skills: Credit Rating 30%, Intimidate 55%, Language (English) 50%, Mechanical Repair 60%, Spot Hidden 40%.

Defenses: Regenerates 1 hit point every minute. Knocked out for 1D6 rounds if taken to 0 HP. Cannot be killed while the icon of The Phantom of Truth stands.

Nationality: British
Age: 43
Education: Vocational training as a mechanic
Spells: none.

Indefinite Insanity: Terrified and paranoid, quick to blame everyone else when things go wrong.

Notes: Large and once-muscular, now turning to fat. Walsh has short-cropped greying brown hair and a number of tattoos on his arms, hands, and neck. He wears a bomber jacket, filthy white T-shirt, jeans and work boots.

Walsh's ex-wife, Tracy, tricked him into coming here, telling him that she was in trouble. She has been through UNLAND and believes it can help him understand how his violent temper poisoned their marriage.

REMNANTS

STR 55 CON 55 SIZ 55 INT 65 POW 55
DEX 55 HP 11
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10), damage special (grab, then opposed **POW** roll to merge with target)

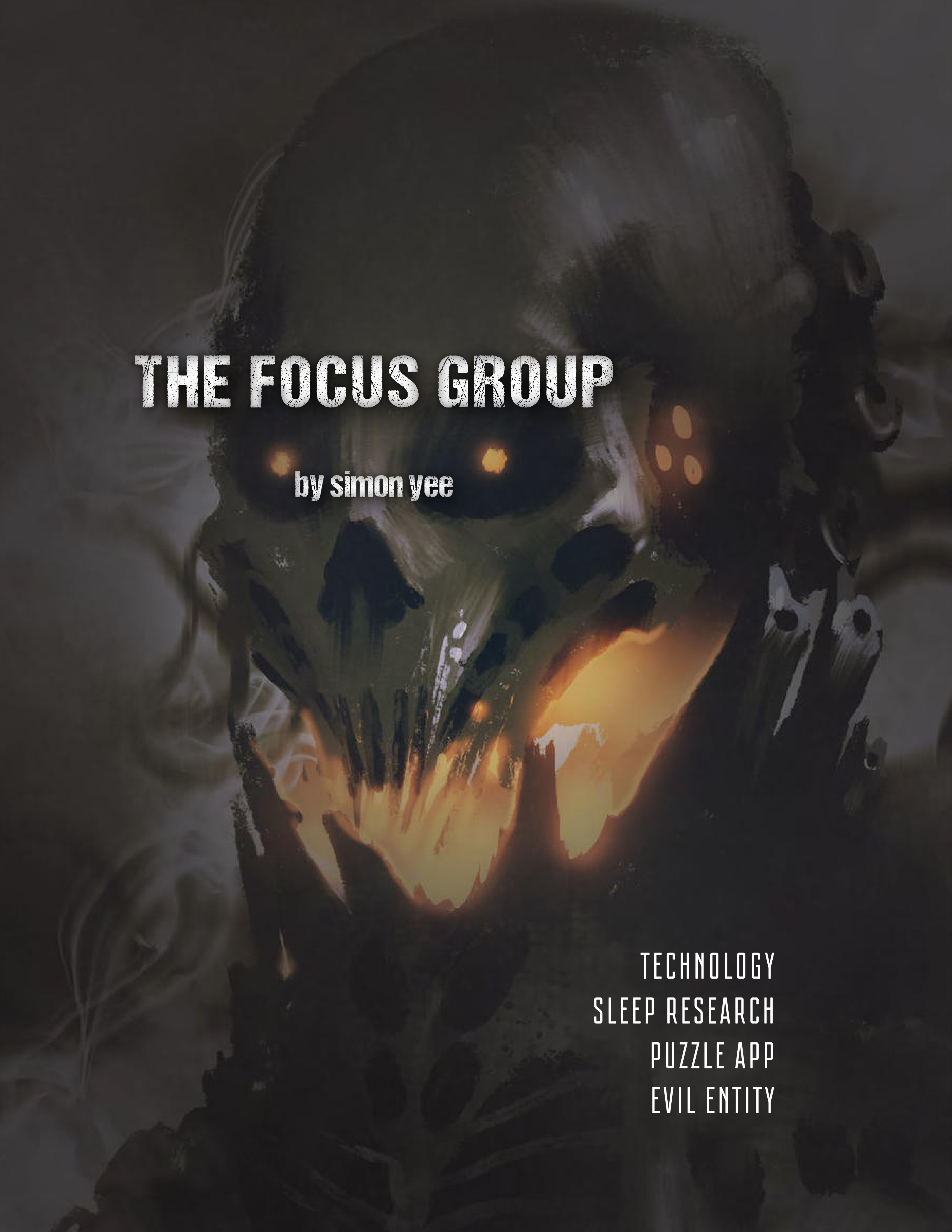
Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills: Listen 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%.

Defenses: Takes minimum damage from impaling weapons. Regenerates 1 hit point every minute. Disabled for 1D6 rounds if taken to 0 HP.

While a Remnant cannot be killed, an investigator may attempt to trap one in a mirror. Wielding a mirror and pushing it into a Remnant is a combat maneuver. The maneuver earns a penalty die if the mirror is smaller than the Remnant or larger than the investigator.

Spells: none.
SAN Loss: 0/1D6



THE FOCUS GROUP

by simon yee

TECHNOLOGY
SLEEP RESEARCH
PUZZLE APP
EVIL ENTITY

Introduction

A marketing research team is conducting a product focus group for a phone game app called "The Cage of Morpheus" ("TCOM"). Initial beta-testing by the investigator's prior focus group found the game to be of potential interest to target buyers, but the background music was so annoying that further product development was needed. The marketing research team for TCOM has now asked a previous focus group back to try out adjustments they made to the game, based on the prior feedback about the crappy music.

In their haste to rush the game to market and cash in on the geocaching game craze, instead of finding a better sound track, the TCOM designers added an inaudible sub-frequency tone to the pre-existing music. This sub-frequency was created by psychologist and researcher Dr. Hans Clek, who theorized that it would affect people at a subconscious level to make the repetition of the music relaxing (vs. irritatingly repetitive), and make the game more addictive.

The focus group takes place in Dr. Hans Clek's sleep research lab's conference room. In addition to making players relax, the inaudible sub-frequency happens to open the mind to influences from the Dreamlands. Unfortunately for the players, an old keepsake from Dr. Clek's former research mentor, Dr. Nils Garmel, is in the focus room to test the fuzzy logic capacity of the game. Called the Shadow Box, it houses an old shadow monster from the Dreamlands. The Shadow within wishes to escape its confinement, by influencing those listening to the sub-frequency, and return back to the Dreamlands.

Involving the Investigators

One or more of the investigators participated, on a whim, in a marketing research focus group six months ago for an app-based game called "The Cage of Morpheus." TCOM was a treasure seeking game that uses the camera on one's cell phone to create puzzles for players to solve. TCOM detects certain pre-programmed objects within its parameters through the player's smartphone camera, using geocaching similar to "Pokémon Go!" and then poses riddles and/or further clues when a target object is captured on the camera.

A neat feature about the game is that it has some fuzzy logic programming; it is not strictly limited to pre-programmed objects but can detect and analyze general shapes, sizes, and colors and (within limits) come up with riddles on the fly based on random objects in the environment.

The investigators who participated all agreed that TCOM was a great idea, but the obnoxious music in the game eventually made the game play unbearable after about 10 minutes. They filled out the survey at the end and each got $300 for their time.

The marketing research group has called you back because they have taken your feedback and want to see if the 'improvements' they've made have satisfied your previous complaints about the music. For an hour of time, the marketing research group will pay you $1,500. Instead of meeting at the previous focus group location at the mall, participants are told to go to a research office near a local University. It turns out to be a medical office building, with the third floor shared by a Dr. Hans Clek (a psychologist) and the Clek Sleep Clinic.

Quick Internet research on Dr. Clek reveals a professional biography. He is a consulting psychologist who lists clients as including several game developers, product developers and (unnamed) sports stars and celebrities. He bills himself out as a "performance optimizer" and "life coach," with research interests including attention deficit disorder, improving sleep, and improving attention span. His credentials are legitimate and include an undergraduate degree in psychology from the Netherlands (1979) and a Ph.D. in Psychology from UCLA (1986). He proves to be a thin, bald gentleman with the hint of a Dutch accent, very proper and polite. He is also listed as the CEO of the company that runs the adjoining sleep clinic, Clek Sleep Improvement, LLC, which caters to people with sleep apnea and other sleep disorders. No hint of any criminal activity or occult shenanigans on the part of Dr. Clek can be found through quick Internet research.

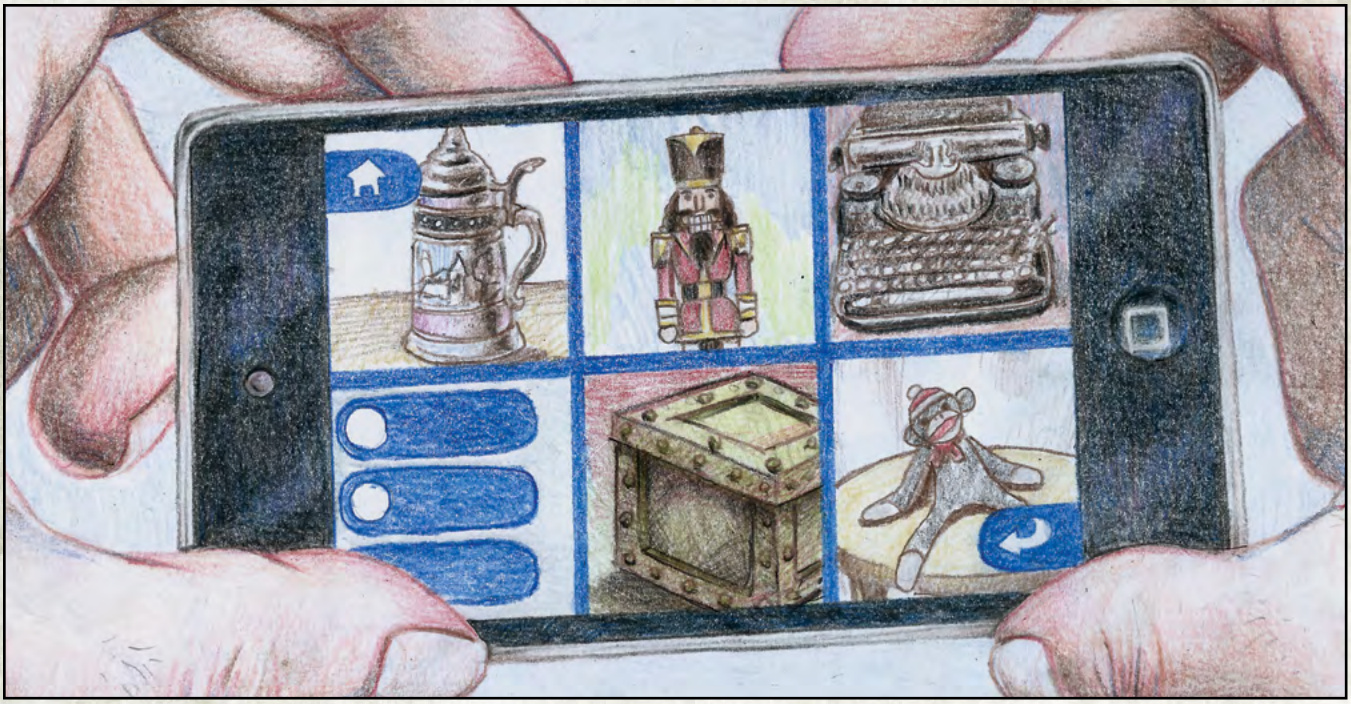
TRACK MARKS

One of Dr. Clek's unnamed celebrity clients is London Sinclair, from "**Phlebotomy**," While the two are separate scenarios, if you plan on running both, then based on the events in "**Phlebotomy**," it is recommended that this scenario be run first.

The TCOM marketing researcher, Sam Weldon, meets you at the door and directs you to a large conference room. In the room is an oval conference table, and the walls are lined with bookshelves holding journals and texts on sleep and psychology. In the south corner is a small end table, with various objects: a ceramic beer stein, red Christmas nutcracker soldier, old manual typewriter, antique brass-studded box, and a sock monkey puppet.

There are two doors in the conference room. One door leads to the lobby and the exit of the facility. The other goes to the bathrooms and a locked double door leading to the sleep lab. On the table is a sheet of paper for each person in the focus group with the Wi-Fi password (Jung) and download instructions for the app, along with a link to a secured website for players to be briefed about the research and electronically sign a consent to participate.

Sam Weldon, a preppy looking young man in a sweater vest, welcomes everyone and directs them to read the sheet in front of them, and then introduces Dr. Hans Clek as a researcher who has helped refine the music of the game to make it not seem repetitive or irritating. Assuming that everyone wishes to participate, Sam Weldon asks everyone to start playing the game after they have downloaded the app



and signed the consent form. If investigators choose not to participate, then they will be given $50 and escorted out. To get the full $1,500 you have to stay for a full hour and fill out an exit questionnaire at the end. There are a total of 7 people doing the focus group (this count includes the investigators; any extras are NPCs).

Let's Play TCOM!

First Game

The investigators need to do full, 360 degree scans with their phones. Investigators find that the music sounds the same as last time, but for some reason, it does not get on their nerves this time. A blue footprint icons appears, leading to the sock monkey puppet. When players aim their cameras phone on the sock monkey, it begins to talk in a low voice, saying, "Welcome to The Cage of Morpheus! I have hidden a special gem, but you will have to be wise and crafty to figure out where it hides. Because it sits among others that sleep in the month of August of this year, found within forty-two dead leaves." The answer is the August (of this year) *Journal of Sleep Studies* on the shelves of the conference room, which must be opened to page 42. When players open up the journal to that page, their phones' screens will show a prismatic display and a big red ruby will appear on screen. The sock monkey's voice then screams: "You got 200 experience!"

Note that the *Journal of Sleep Studies* issues on the shelves stretch back into the 1960s. Up until 1992, these were addressed to Dr. Nils Garmel at UCLA If anyone asks about or admires the box, Dr. Clek might mention that it is an antique that belonged to his former mentor, Dr. Garmel.

Second Game

The second game starts like the first game, and the sock monkey puppet says, "You did well my friend. Can you find my next gem? It is trapped, and only the red guard knows where it lies." The red guard is the red Christmas Nutcracker, and if the phone's camera is aimed at it, then it will have a text bubble by its mouth saying, "I am like an egg, only flat as a pancake. People, kings, queens, and fools surround me, but none ever eat me. I cannot run or walk, but I have four legs." The answer is the oval table in the room.

If players have turned off the music up to this point, then they will catch a sapphire gem, with all the pomp and circumstance as before. If they have not (Sam Weldon and Dr. Clek watch from within the room, and will encourage players to keep the music on) then something completely different happens. On the table the players will see "Help me! I am being tortured." written in blood. Players will see this on their phones first but afterwards, as long as they listen to the music, the writing will be seen without the aid of the camera and will feel real if touched or tasted.

Sam Weldon and Dr. Clek will not see this; this fact should be noticed by the players or NPCs complaining about it. Subsequently, another blood scrawl will appear on the door leading to the rest room and sleep lab, saying "I need to go home. I am trapped! Find the box to free me." The sock monkey puppet will then start screaming, "Help me! The key is in the box! Right here in the box. Save me! I am being held against my will! The key to leaving is the box! Open the damn box on the end table! That !@#$%^ Dr. Clek is behind this, he's some kind of sorcerer!" If players move to examine the brass studded box, the sock puppet will scream, "Yes! For the love of God, help me! He can't hear me, I don't have much longer left!" Those that have this experience will cost **SAN** 0/1D4, even if they turn the phone off after seeing the blood on the table. The brass studded box is the Shadow Box (see below).

If the players learn that the box once belonged to Dr. Clek's mentor, Dr. Garmel, they might try to Google him on their phones. They should make a **Library Use** roll to find something useful in sufficient time to affect the proceedings (a few minutes). Even with a failure, they find references to a sleep expert named Dr. Nils Garmel, who died in 1992. They also find that he had an interest in hypnotism and the occult, as he wrote several papers on the subjects in the *Journal of Sleep Studies*, including "The Use of Hypnotism on Semi-Waking Subjects in Various Magical Traditions," 1972).

Should they succeed in their **Library Use** roll, they locate a newspaper article in the Los Angeles Times that recounts his death and contains a crime scene photograph. The article recounts the death of prominent psychologist Dr. Nils Garmel, a professor at UCLA, due to evident foul play. A photo shows a small office at UCLA which has obviously been trashed and is covered in blood splatters. On the desk is the same brass bound box. A police spokesman speculates that he must have run afoul of a madman late at night, and that Dr. Garmel was fond of sleeping in his office.

The Decision Point

Sam Weldon and Dr. Clek will tell people to turn the phones off once investigators or NPCs start pointing out experiences that they cannot see or hear. The sock monkey puppet, by contrast will continue to yell at the players that Sam Weldon and Dr. Clek are sorcerers and murderers, and they are torturing him. Indeed, the sock monkey will say pretty much anything to have players keep their phones on and not trust Weldon and Clek. Weldon and Clek may call the police and have the law enforcement psychiatric response team come out to evaluate investigators if they become too irrational, but it takes them several minutes to arrive at best.

At this point, it is up to the investigators to decide what to do. If the investigators decide not to open the box and leave, let them know they can feel and hear the soft cry of a child in the back of their mind. If they open it, their day gets even worse, as the monster within attacks. Even if they do not open the box, it is possible that a soft-hearted NPC moves to do so, either openly or stealthily. Just because the investigators are cautious does not mean that the NPCs are, or that they conclude that this is just a continuation of game play. Stopping such a person or persons may boil down to a matter of physical restraint or a successful **Persuade** roll (role-played out), with a +40% bonus if the investigators show the NPC the prior news coverage of Dr. Garmel's demise.

Rewards and Repercussions

Preventing the opening of the Shadow Box gains each investigator 1D3 **SAN**.

The Shadow Box

A wood box with a brass clasp and hinges. It has numerous brass studs around it in various patterns including: an American Braille warning not to open, or death and dismemberment will occur; and a star design with a burning eye in the middle on the lid with weird squiggly writing along the sides. This last can be identified with a **Cthulhu Mythos** roll, or prior experience, as an Elder Sign.

The Shadow Box holds the captured essence of what Jungian psychoanalysts call the "Shadow Aspect." The Shadow Aspect represents the collective unconsciousness, holding the ancient archetypes imprinted in our DNA. Primal and repulsive to our conscious self, these aspects of us are in the deepest, darkest pit of our unconscious minds. We only have clues to their existence when we perceive them in others. In therapy, a Jungian psychoanalyst tries to merge these aspects with our conscious mind. But some things are never meant to be disturbed, and that is what the box holds, the shadows that consumed their hosts.

The Shadow Box is a magical artifact, meant to contain the unconscious dream material of those linked to the Great Old Ones. The rough magic was taught by ghouls who had guided a group of Jungian alienists to the Dreamlands. Inside the box is the captured Shadow of an individual who had a strong genetic taint of the Great Old Ones, such as someone who does not know they are a deep one hybrid, or belong to the hereditary line of Tcho-Tchos. Semi-corporeal, the creature is released from the box by opening it. If the corporeal aspect of it is destroyed, or the box is closed again (something the creature will strive mightily to prevent), the creature will return back to the box, until some foolhardy or unwary individual opens it again.

The Shadow in the Box is a monstrous, vaguely humanoid shaped beast. Its head is a hellish orifice with glowing steam leaking out like cruel tendrils. Its hands are charred claws holding a gelatinous tablet with its ancient Hyborian name and the words of a Gate spell to the Dreamlands (*Create Gate of Oneirology*). There are eyeballs and disfigured faces blistering from its body, like a sickening spread of boils.

Its claws rend the body of an intended victim, until the person is rendered unconscious. It then uses it orifice to drain the essence out of that unconscious victim. If the creature is able to siphon four times its own **POW**, it will open a Gate and return back to the Dreamlands, to evolve into its ancient primal state.

THE SHADOW IN THE BOX

STR 120	CON 100	SIZ 65	INT 60	POW 70
DEX 30				HP 100*

Damage bonus: +1D6

Build: 2

Move: 8

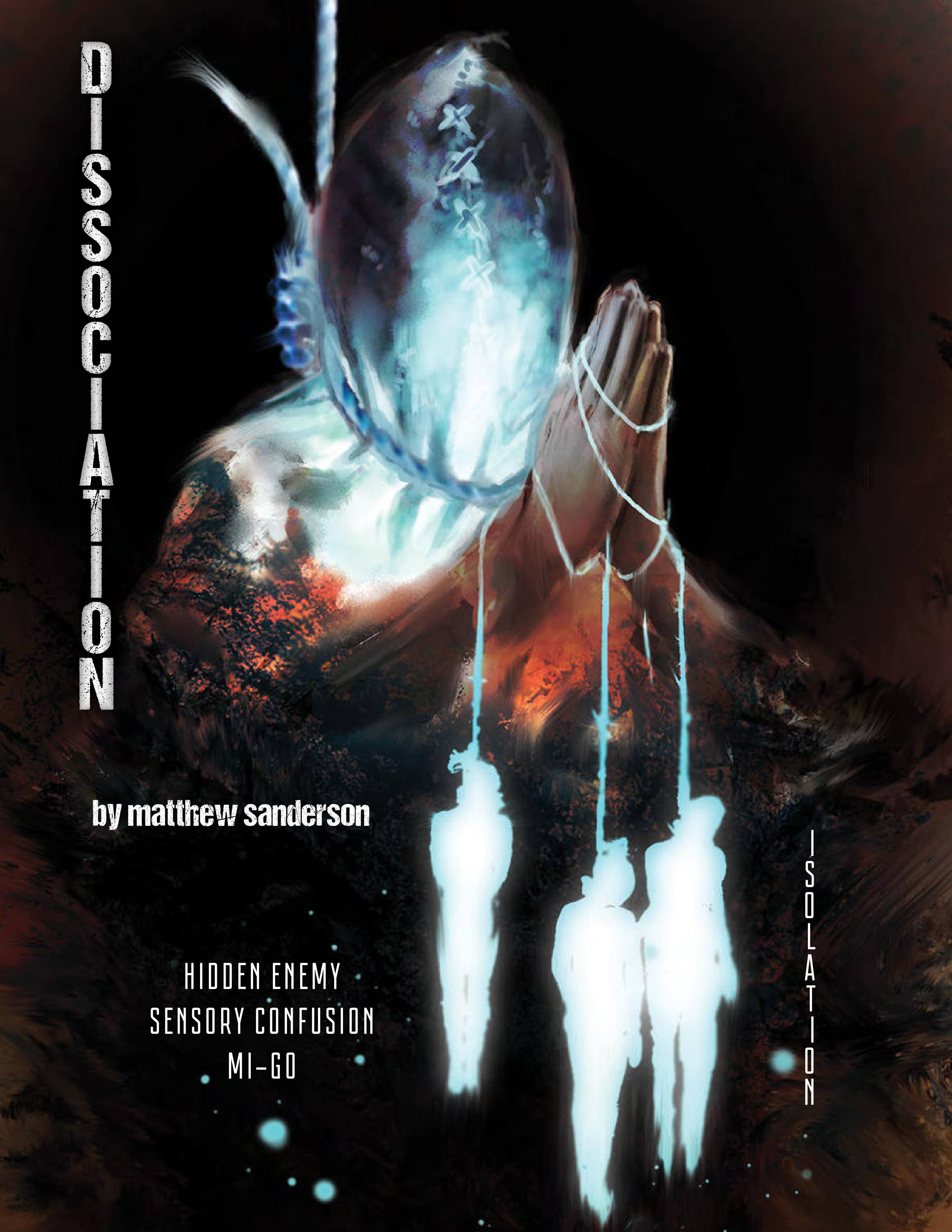
ATTACKS

Fighting (Claws) 66% (33/13), damage 1D6+db (cutting damage)

Orifice Attack 50% (25/10), damage 1D6 permanent POW drain per attack

Defenses: Semi-corporeal existence halves damage from all physical attacks.

SAN Loss: 1/1D8



DISSOCIATION

by matthew sanderson

HIDDEN ENEMY
SENSORY CONFUSION
MI-GO

ISOLATION

Introduction

The mi-go have mined precious minerals on Earth for millennia. Even after all this time, they still don't fully understand humanity. The concept of "sanity" remains alien to them. A mi-go scientist wants to examine this condition further.

The scientist has created three test environments near an old mi-go mine in Alaska. Each environment is designed to erode the sanity of his test subjects. To optimally observe the progress of his experiment, the scientist will observe the brains of the test subjects in mi-go brain cylinders.

The test subjects will experience the three environments remotely, through "vessels"—abducted humans with devices surgically implanted in their brains, allowing the mi-go complete control over them. These devices also connect remotely to the brain cylinders, providing the captive, disembodied brains with the illusion of being in a human body.

The experiment will also evaluate the potential risk that humanity could pose to the mi-go, as the humans' numbers have grown significantly in recent centuries. The humans' problem solving capacity will also be tested. Depending on the test subjects' depth of understanding of their situation, the current threat level of the human species can also be assessed.

The investigators are the test subjects. They must work out what has happened to them and follow the clues leading to their brains…although their original bodies are lost forever.

Involving the Investigators

The investigators can have any background and need not know each other prior to play. All of them are on a nighttime flight from San Diego to Seattle, which takes three hours. The time of year and purpose of their journey are not important.

Abduction

The investigators are sitting near each other. Two hours into the flight, a group of mi-go attack the plane with an electromagnetic pulse weapon. The plane and all onboard electrical devices lose power. The engines stop, passengers panic, but the plane does not fall—it is held by a gravity manipulator. **Spot Hidden** rolls reveal color-changing lights (the heads of the mi-go) moving in the sky. **Listen** rolls reveal something crawling over the hull.

Multiple sections of the hull are ripped away and the cabin depressurizes. Extreme **DEX** rolls allow the investigators to grab onto something (with a Bonus die if buckled into their seat). Failure results in them being sucked out with other passengers. Those remaining in the plane see the mi-go crawling into the plane before they detect a strange smell and everything goes black (**SAN** loss is 0/1D6).

Those sucked from the plane enter freefall towards certain death (**SAN** loss is 1D3/1D10). A failed **SAN** roll means that the investigator panics, screams, and passes out. Success means that they are aware and feel it when the many arms of a mi-go wrap around them from behind, before everything goes black.

Each investigator is ultimately anesthetized by the mi-go. While unconscious, their brains are transferred to brain cylinders. The investigators are unaware of this transfer, however.

Dreamscape

The investigators awaken on a cold, metal floor in complete darkness. This is a shared dreamscape, created by the scientist to observe and question the investigators in. The investigators feel that they are dressed as they were, but all their possessions are missing.

The investigators can hear and feel those around them. Each time that they enter the dreamscape, they are a few feet from each other at its center. Exploring, they can determine they are in a circular, metal-lined room with no doors, approximately one-hundred feet across. The ceiling is too high to reach. Events that would normally cause injury do not inflict damage in the dreamscape. The investigators feel only a slight discomfort from any impact. Testing the limits of this (biting themselves, punching walls, etc.) reveals that their environment is unnatural (**SAN** loss 1/1D4).

The length of the initial dreamscape scene is left to the Keeper's discretion. The experiment then begins with "Environment One".

Environment One

The scientist wishes to observe how identity affects sanity. Aniak, Alaska, is a small town (population 500) built around the Aniak airport, on the south bank of the Kuskokwim River, 320 miles west of Anchorage. It serves as a regional hub for a number of small villages scattered around the region, and is not connected via road to any other population center. It's accessible primarily by air (regular flights are twice per week). It has a police station (with one part-time officer), post office, school, and general store. Approximately 70% of the population is of Native American descent. Serious problems require a call to the Alaska State Troopers, who must fly in to respond (taking several hours).

Two days ago, residents (equaling the number of investigators) from the southwest corner of town were reported missing. Abducted by the mi-go, they are now vessels. This morning, they were directed to break into a cabin on the east side of town. One of the neighbors, Jane Spencer, saw this and went to intervene. The vessels, under mi-go control, stabbed her to death. Another neighbor witnessed this and called John Shangin, the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO), the resident part-time policeman, who in turn has just called the Alaska State Troopers.

The investigators find themselves in the cabin lounge. They see and feel everything through the vessels, as if it were their own body. Jane's body (mid-30s) lies by the front door in a pool of blood. Knives still protrude from her (**SAN** loss is 0/1D4). The vessels are all in various states of undress, positioned near each other, implying they were (or were about to be) engaged in sexual activity. Some of the vessels are male, some female. All are between 30 and 40 years old and splattered with Jane's blood. Mirrors around the room quickly reveal the investigators' new bodies (**SAN** loss, 1/1D8).

The investigators keep their original skills and characteristics, except for **STR**, **CON**, **SIZ**, **DEX** and **APP**, which will need to be determined anew for each vessel they inhabit.

Seconds later, armed Alaska State Troopers (accompanied by the VPSO) force their way into the cabin. Discovering the body, they will attempt to take the investigators into custody. The Keeper is encouraged to let events develop from here as determined by the investigators' actions.

Aniak is a small community so the VPSO is a friend (maybe even lover) of the vessels. He wants to know what happened to their friends, and why they have murdered Jane. Some of the officers may want to help them in order to understand, others may be aggressive and confrontational. All assume initially that the investigators drank themselves into a blackout on smuggled alcohol (Aniak is a dry town), and then things got worse from there. The Keeper is encouraged to make NPCs demonstrate a range of responses.

Example names and occupations for the vessels (and police officers) follow. The investigators should be addressed using these names.

NAMES:

Abigail Davis, James Hunt, Jennifer Thomas, Madison Johnson, Mason Locklear, Perry Orchard, Peter Roberts, Scott Sullivan, Sophie Miller, William Yazzie

OCCUPATIONS:

Airport technician, Electrician, Pilot, Post officer, Teacher, Tour operator

Investigation

Either by evading capture or by getting the police on their side, the investigators could research what happened to their plane. News reports state the plane crashed two weeks ago in mysterious circumstances. Investigations are ongoing. There were no survivors (**SAN** loss 1/1D6).

The vessels do not speak with the investigators' voices. If they call friends, loved ones or business associates, they are treated as prank callers and met with hostility (at worst) or skepticism (at best). If they try the trick of bringing up secrets that only the investigators would know, they may generate some confusion, but ultimately, they are extremely unlikely to convince anyone that their minds have been swapped into another body. Of course, persons with Mythos knowledge might be an exception to this rule.

Examining Vessels (Now and Later)

Spot Hidden checks reveal a circular cut under the hair on the back of their heads. Prying up the skin reveals a three-inch diameter metal sphere device embedded in the scalp, from which a series of small needles extend into the brain (**SAN** loss is 1/1D4). **Medicine** rolls can remove the spheres, but invariably kill the vessel in the process, returning the investigator to the dreamscape.

Vessel Termination

When the investigators learn of their apparent demise, cross the town boundaries, or when the Keeper finds it dramatic, the scientist terminates the vessels. The spheres embedded in their brains rapidly heat to an exceptionally high temperature, manifesting initially as a sudden, painful headache. Second later, their heads, then bodies, spontaneously combust, destroying the spheres. The investigators find themselves back in the dreamscape. No physical evidence of mi-go activity remains in Aniak. The investigator with the lowest **Luck** survives long enough to see what happens to the others (**SAN** loss is 1/1D6).

Dreamscape Interlude

Upon returning to the dreamscape, the investigators revert to their original characteristics. It feels like they are in their original bodies. The scientist observes how the investigators react. They may call out for their captors to show themselves. The scientist should not respond. Interaction with the investigators could allow them to deduce they are in an experiment. Consequently, they could try to subvert or resist the experiment.

After time for some discussion, the investigators find themselves in **Environment Two**.

Environment Two

The scientist wishes to observe how manipulating the human body affects sanity, as well as human problem-solving ability. A week ago, history and geology students and their lecturers (the number of investigators plus five), from the University of Alaska Anchorage, camped in the ghost town of Bluff, 50 miles east of Nome on the coast of the Seward Peninsula. The history students examined the remains of the Nome Gold Rush mining town established in 1900. The geology students examined the stream running through the town from which gold was extracted. They were all captured by the mi-go. Five became subjects of surgical experiments testing the malleability of the human body. The rest became vessels.

The investigators find themselves in sleeping bags, crammed into a tent. All vessels are in their mid-20s and dressed in warm outdoor clothing. Some of the vessels are male, some female. The Keeper is at liberty to determine their ethnicity.

It is a windy late afternoon. Six large tents are pitched in a circle on the outskirts of the ghost town. Bluff is a handful of dilapidated huts and cabins in a rocky, sloped clearing, 1,000 feet long, 300 feet across. A shallow stream runs through the clearing, towards the nearby sea. The clearing is bordered by dwarf willow and bushes.

All electrical devices have been thrown into the stream, rending them inoperable. Anything bearing the vessels' identities has been burnt on a nearby campfire. Everything else (food, cooking equipment, etc.) is untouched. Textbooks on geology and the Alaskan Gold Rush, along with maps of the area, are in the tents. The mi-go left these as part of the problem-solving test.

Bomb

In the center of Bluff, by the stream, stands a six-foot tall, three-foot wide metal cylinder. It cannot be moved. This is a bomb, the purpose of which is to remove all evidence of mi-go activity once the location has served its purpose. There are three holes (circular, triangular, and square) around its middle. Rods fitting these holes are found with each test subject's cabin (see below).

When all of the rods are inserted, it detonates, destroying everything within a half-mile radius, similar to a fuel-air explosion. The bomb is also set to detonate if the investigators walk more than a quarter of a mile away from Bluff, or if they remain in Bluff for more than three hours. There is no warning given prior to detonation.

Test Subjects

The test subjects are in three cabins near the bomb. Sounds that they make can easily be heard. Seeing a test subject provokes a **Sanity** roll (SAN loss is 1/1D8). Putting a subject out of their misery forces another roll (SAN loss is 0/1D4).

Subject one calls out for help, saying that she can't see and that she is very cold. Her internal organs are suspended from the roof of the cabin, connected by webs of veins, arteries and muscle tissue. Her mouth is still connected via wind pipe to her lungs, allowing her to talk. Her ears and eyes are missing. Communication with her is impossible. The circle-rod lays on the floor.

Subject two makes garbled noises. His body has been rearranged. The mouth is extended across his abdomen; eyes replace nipples; genitals sit atop the head; legs and arms extend from the groin to stand on all fours; and the anus is in the middle of the back. His hands and feet are chained to the floor. He is completely insane. The triangle-rod lays in one corner.

Subjects three, four, and five have had all bones removed, been melded together and spread thinly across the interior walls of the cabin. Eyes blink slowly; open mouths moan; flesh pulses randomly. There are male and female body parts visible. The square-rod lays by the door.

Dreamscape Interlude

Once the bomb detonates, the investigators return to the dreamscape. Using a voice comprised of all of the investigators' voices overlaid, echoing throughout the chamber, the Scientist asks about their reactions to the bomb ("Why did you insert the rods when you did not know its function?" or "Why did you ignore the device?" etc.). It will not respond to anything the investigators state, but will say "Thank you" before connecting them to the vessels in Environment Three. If the investigators' answer is along the lines of "this obviously is not completely real, and we assumed that activating the device would move things along," the scientist mutters "fascinating" before moving on to **Environment Three**.

Environment Three

The scientist wishes to observe how sanity is affected by encountering creatures not of the investigators' world. Twenty miles southeast of Ruby, Alaska (a small town on the Yukon river), thick woods hug a stream meandering through a valley. Vacationing hunters (equaling the number of investigators) went into the woods three days ago. They were captured by the mi-go and became vessels.

The investigators find themselves standing in a circle, deep in the woods, as the sun sets. Some of the vessels are male, some female. The Keeper is at liberty to determine their ethnicity. They carry backpacks with camping gear, maps, and personal possessions. Each is armed with a hunting rifle (damage 2D6+4), two knives (damage 1D6+db), and six flares (damage 1D4+1D3 burn).

The mi-go have captured a formless spawn and have let it loose in the vicinity to see how the investigators react. Combat is likely to occur but if the investigators choose to run, they should be given a chance to escape. The Keeper should use the average characteristics in the *Call of Cthulhu Keeper Rulebook*, pp. 293–294. Flares are the best weapon against it. If reduced to half hit points or fewer, it flees.

Investigation

Personal possessions in the backpacks reveal the vessels' names (of the Keeper's choice), and that they have professional jobs (e.g., lawyers, accountants, etc.) in a large American city (of the Keeper's choice).

Each vessel has a satellite phone, with reception. If this is the first time that the investigators have had access to a phone, they may call friends or family. Refer to "Investigation" in "Environment One" for likely responses. Phones and watches confirm that the date and time are the end of the same day as it was in Aniak.

Invoices in one bag show that they have rooms at a fly-in hunting lodge near Ruby. There is an extra room booked for a "Joshua Passantino." Another invoice identifies him as a sea-plane charter pilot, hired by the vessels to help them get to various hunting spots along the Yukon river. He is waiting at the lodge to take them to their next destination.

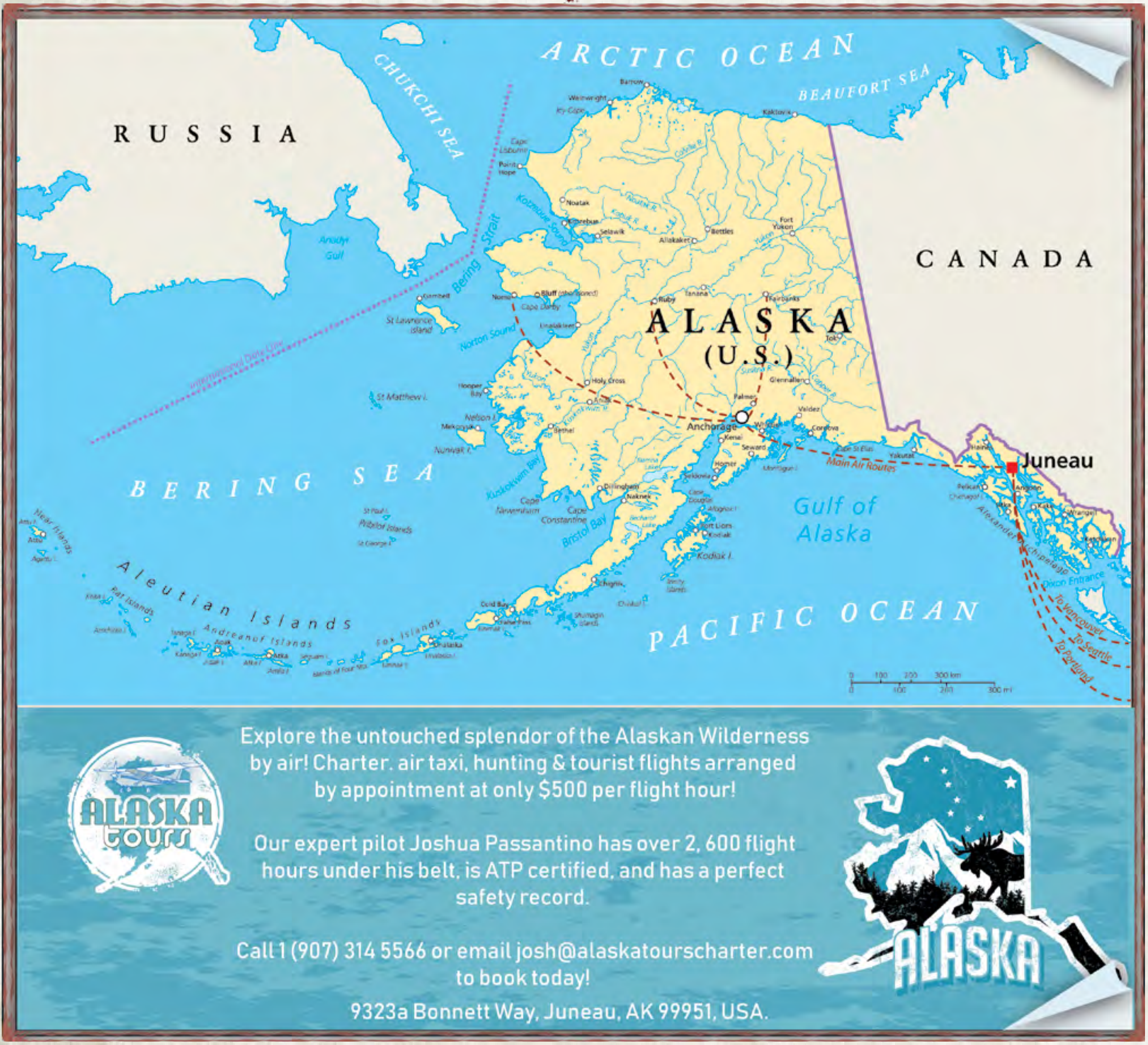
Maps of Alaska and around Ruby reveal their current location. Connecting this point to Aniak and Bluff forms an equilateral triangle. The scientist's laboratory is at the center, on Eagle Island (see below). Passantino can fly them there, once they have hiked back to Ruby.

Laboratory

Eagle Island lies in the Yukon river, 140 miles north of Aniak. It is nine miles long and one mile wide. It is covered in trees and crisscrossed by small streams. At its center is a mound with an open mine tunnel, descending into the darkness.

After 100 feet, the tunnel opens into a cavern where the mi-go have mined. A ledge overlooks a cone-shaped hole, several hundred feet across and of great depth. A phosphorescent green glow illuminates the cavern. Carven rock steps lead down to another, wider ledge, where two square structures stand. Each has a single entrance. Between them is an arch of polished metal with a pedestal in front of it. This is a Gate to Yuggoth. Touching the pedestal and spending 1 Magic Point opens the Gate.

The left-hand structure is the laboratory, containing the brain cylinders (*Call of Cthulhu Keeper Rulebook*, p. 269) resting on pillars. A three-inch sphere is plugged into each cylinder. Disconnecting a sphere sends an investigator into a vivid, dreamlike state and their vessel stands motionless until reconnected. Examining the cylinders (opening them, disconnecting the spheres, etc.) reveals that their brains are all that remain of the investigators (**SAN** loss is 1D3/1D10).


ARCTIC OCEAN
BEAUFORT SEA
CHUKCHI SEA
RUSSIA
CANADA
ALASKA
(U.S.)
Anadyr Gulf
Bering Strait
International Date Line
Norton Sound
Kotzebue Sound
BERING SEA
Gulf of Alaska
PACIFIC OCEAN
Aleutian Islands
Bristol Bay
Kuskokwim Bay
Point Hope
Noatak
Kotzebue
Selawik
Bettles
Allakaket
Fort Yukon
Nome
Bluff (abandoned)
Cape Darby
Unalakleet
Ruby
Tanana
Fairbanks
Tok
Holy Cross
Aniak
Bethel
Hooper Bay
Nelson I.
Glennallen
Palmer
Anchorage
Valdez
Cordova
Kenai
Seward
Homer
Dillingham
Naknek
Kodiak I.
St Lawrence Island
St Matthew I.
Nunivak I.
Main Air Routes
Juneau
Alexander Archipelago
Dixon Entrance
To Vancouver
To Seattle
To Portland

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9323a Bonnett Way, Juneau, AK 99951, USA.

Other standard sensory apparatus that can be attached to the brain cylinders (allowing the brains within to "see," "hear," and "speak" after a fashion), are close by.

The right-hand structure contains another bomb (see **Environment Two**). The three rods are slowly being pulled in. The investigators have two rounds from its discovery to prevent detonation by removing all the rods. **STR** rolls are required for one investigator to remove one rod. A Hard **STR** roll is required to remove two rods at once. If the rods are not extracted in time, the cavern is incinerated, destroying everything (including the brain cylinders).

The Scientist

The scientist is departing through the Gate as the investigators enter the cavern. The Keeper should use the average characteristics for the mi-go as per the *Call of Cthulhu Keeper Rulebook*, p. 301. It opens the Gate on the first round and flies through it on the second round. The Gate closes behind it. Investigators touching the pedestal can open the Gate, but going through puts the vessel far beyond its maximum range (see **Survivors**, below), putting the investigator into a dream-like state.

If the scientist returns to Yuggoth, it delivers its report that the human race could now be a potential threat, but that more investigation is required.

Survivors

If the investigators still have command of their vessels, they could try building a new life (or assume the vessel's former identity) with them. The spheres can only transmit to vessels within a 200-mile range, so they will have to somehow get their brain cylinders to some less remote location. Once a vessel travels beyond this distance, the investigators begin to dream, possibly forever, unless the vessel is brought closer again or standard sensory apparatus is connected.

Rewards and Repercussions

For surviving the experiment, each investigator gains 1D8 **SAN.** Putting test subjects out of their misery gains each investigator+2 **SAN** per test subject. Killing the monster in Environment Three earns each investigator 1D4 **SAN**. For killing the scientist, each investigator gains 1D6 **SAN.**

HUMAN RESISTANCE (Police, Test Subjects, Residents of Aniak)

STR 50	CON 55	SIZ 50	INT 85	POW 60
DEX 55	APP 55	EDU 90	SAN varies	HP 10

Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10) (Police), 35% (17/7) (all others):

Dodge 30% (15/6)

Skills: Listen 35%, Psychology 25%, Spot Hidden 45%.
Nationality: American
Age: varies.
Spells: none.

POETRY NIGHT

by oscar rios

POETRY SLAM
POCKET DIMENSION
ALTERED STATES
CARCOSA

Introduction

A BEAUTIFUL LAKESIDE COFFEE HOUSE HOSTS A MONTHLY POETRY NIGHT, UNTIL THINGS GO HORRIBLY WRONG, THANKS TO THE KING IN YELLOW.

Involving the Investigators

This scenario takes place in a mountain community called the Pine County Artist Enclave, home to artists, poets, and professional psychics. The enclave is centered around a village called Whispering Pines, located 85 minutes from the nearest urban area. It's a quiet community where everyone knows one another and little of consequence happens.

The Lakeside Coffee House

The Lakeside is a coffee house located ½ mile from Whispering Pines, serving a wide array of coffees, teas, and baked goods. It has comfortable furniture, small intimate tables, a fireplace, and four large bookcases. The books are a mix of classic volumes and works donated by local authors, and are for on-premises reading only.

The coffee house sits beside Juniper Lake and has a large rear deck accessible through two large floor-to-ceiling glass doors, offering breathtaking views. It's a beautiful location where couples go on dates, small weddings are held, and photo shoots take place. The Lakeside also hosts special events, such as art shows, acoustic music performances, and a monthly poetry night.

Poetry Slam

The scenario begins with investigators attending poetry night at The Lakeside. Why is up to the Keeper—maybe they stopped in for a quick beverage, were consulting with a local psychic, or were invited by a poet performing there. Hidden in one of the bookcases is a copy of *The King in Yellow*, an English language version from Golden Goblin Press, published in 1932. On the inside of the back cover is an active Yellow Sign. The book is magically warded to return to the bookcase, even if removed from the premises. Even if locked in a safe or physically destroyed, the book reappears in its usual place. The reason being: The Great Old One Hastur wishes to add a coffee house to his domain.

Two locals, Ronald Kendell and Sophie McKendric, have gone mad after reading *The King in Yellow* and are enacting a ritual that they barely understand at the poetry slam. Ronald will read a poem from *The King in Yellow* and then cast a spell placed in his mind by Hastur, fueling it with his own death (via a revolver). This will transport The Lakeside to the realm of Carcosa. His accomplice Sophie, who works at The Lakeside as a barista, was supposed to kill herself as well, to lock the coffee house in the realm of chaos for all time.

However, Sophie's nerves fail her and instead she locks herself in a back storeroom as The Lakeside is transported to Carcosa. Now, the assimilation of the coffee house as a permanent part of Carcosa happens gradually, over a four-hour period. Over the next four hours, The Lakeside slowly changes, becoming a hybrid blend of a rustic American coffee house and strange alien tavern.

The After Party

Sophie expects to arrive in Carcosa alone and watch the coffee house slowly be absorbed into the misty alien city. She is shocked to see that others made the trip with her, namely the investigators and three other patrons. While the smart thing would be to kill them as they lay unconscious (see **The Ritual**, below), her nerves again fail her. She instead searches everyone, takes their weapons and electronic devices, puts them in a Lakeside Coffee tote bag, and tries to hurl the bag into the Lake of Hali. However, she misses and the bag simply slides out of sight. It has since been pushed into clear view by a hungry denizen of the Lake of Hali, hoping to use it as bait. She is unaware of this, and as the investigators begin regaining consciousness, she locks herself back in the rear storage closet.

Play Begins

Keepers should allow the investigators to settle into the coffee house, order a beverage, listen to a few poets, meet other patrons, and interact with the staff. Read some bad (or good) amateur poetry to the investigators and let them "snap" their approval to set the mood. Keepers should mention that several patrons are recording the performances on their phones and handheld devices. The owner says that recording the performers and posting it on social media is allowed, but asks that people tag The Lakeside and the performer's artist page when doing so.

Eventually, local poet Ron Kendell steps up to the microphone. The investigators may have noticed him drinking cups of double expressos and taking a handful of medication before going on. If asked, he says that they are herbal supplements, but they are actually a mix of amphetamines and hallucinogens. He's covered his arms in a mentholated topical cream to mask an unpleasant smell that he's emitting. Investigators may overhear someone comment, "Caffeine's the only thing holding that boy up, looks nervous as hell."

It is more than just nerves; Ronald Kendell is in very poor health. He has a severely infected, self-inflicted wound. He is unconcerned, as he plans to commit suicide at the end of his performance.

The Ritual

Ronald Kendell takes the mic, introduces himself, and says he's performing two poems of his own composition. This is a lie. He starts with "Cassilda's Song, Act 1, Scene 2" of *The King in Yellow*:

Along the shore the cloud waves break,
The twin suns sink behind the lake,
The shadows lengthen
In Carcosa

Strange is the night where black stars rise,
And strange moons circle through the skies,
But stranger still is
Lost Carcosa

Songs that the Hyades shall sing,
Where flap the tatters of the King,
Must die unheard in
Dim Carcosa.

Song of my soul, my voice is dead,
Die though, unsung, as tears unshed
Shall dry and die in
Lost Carcosa

At the end of the poem, the investigators notice mist rising from Juniper Lake through the deck's glass doors. Investigators who have read *The King in Yellow*, or make a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** roll, are aware of the poem's origin. There is some scattered applause, but a number of people seem deeply moved and mildly disturbed. Four patrons look genuinely annoyed. Before Ron begins his next poem, one of them drops a $50 bill on his half-finished coffee cake and leaves. Investigators making a successful **Psychology** roll towards the annoyed patrons determine that they are all angry at Ron, and possibly know the performance was not an original poem. Shooting Ron or taking steps to interfere with his delivery are ineffective; he croaks it out with his dying breaths or screams it out as he is hustled out, and well-meaning patrons who do not understand the implications may interfere with the investigators' effort to silence him.

Assuming that he is not interfered with, Ron pretends to begin his next poem, which he calls "Unmasking the Lie." (If he has been ejected, he forces his way back in, shooting anyone who tries to stop him, and/or bizarrely shrugs off any wounds, seemingly possessed.) He mumbles about masks and truth, lies and the hypocrisy that is our day-to-day lives, the nobility and the soothing embrace of entropy. Then he suddenly rips his shirt open, snapping buttons and baring his chest for the room to see. The Ritual begins.

Ron's bare flesh has been carefully carved away to form an open wound in the shape of The Yellow Sign. His entire torso is discolored with ribbons of purple and red, oozing white puss from cracks and open sores. His body is bloated with infection and reeks of gangrene. The Yellow Sign is crisply outlined in black, necrotic flesh. The arms of the symbol seem to move and writhe, because every centimeter of the wound is covered by fat yellow maggots, greedily feasting on the poet's rotting body.

As the room erupts in screams, Ron begins speaking in a strange alien language. He quickly recites a complex chant whose discordant nature is painful and confusing to hear. Once the chant is done, he pulls a .38 caliber revolver from his pocket, places it under his chin, and fires. His head pitches backwards, portions of his brain and skull splattering the ceiling, but his body does not fall. The Yellow Sign begins glowing and expanding; everything is deafening silence and rushing vertigo. There is a soundless flash as Ron's body bursts, showering everyone with chunks of rotting flesh and maggots. The room starts spinning, stretching, and twisting in on itself. Everyone viewing and experiencing this must make a **Sanity** check for 1D4/1D12 points, before they slip into unconsciousness. Investigators who did not previously have any **Cthulhu Mythos** skill gain +1% from the experience.

The Few Who Remain

When the investigators awaken, they find that they, along with three other patrons, are alone in the coffee house. All of their weapons and electronic devices are now missing as well. There is no trace of anyone else, as those missing patrons were absorbed into Carcosa wholesale, unmade during their transport to the alien world. The reason that the investigators and those three other patrons were not unmade is because they have some familiarity with the Cthulhu Mythos. Their minds are open to the cosmic horrors of the universe. In the game of chaos, this upgrades them from building material to contestant; the game has just begun and the Lakeside is the ultimate escape room.

The Lakeside's New Location

If the investigators look or venture outside they realize the coffee house is no longer in Whispering Pines beside Juniper Lake. Gone are the mountain woods, gravel lined parking lot, and familiar stars. The Lakeside now rests along a boardwalk beside the dark misty Lake of Hali, in an outlying district of the shadowy dead city of Carcosa. All around them it's deathly quiet and still, with wisps of mist floating about in the darkness. The buildings around them are strange and alien but the coffeehouse appears unchanged. This won't last long.

The Others

There are four other people still in The Lakeside—three patrons and a barista (Sophie McKendric, the cultist). The patrons are the same ones who appeared to take offense at Ron claiming "Cassilda's Song" was an original work. They have all read *The King in Yellow* and know about the copy in the reading section of the coffee house. They may appear to be hiding something if investigators make a successful **Psychology** roll, and they are. However, they were not involved in the plot to bring the coffee house to Carcosa, and desperately want to return to Earth. None are aware that the others also read *The King in Yellow*. They are:

- **Derek Klein:** A 40-year-old African American veteran, who lost his right leg, and makes a living as a landscape photographer.
- **Anita Simmons:** A 32-year-old unmarried author, part of a very successful writing/illustrator web comic team.
- **Elvira Saunders:** A teenaged emo/goth girl with many tattoos, who is the daughter of local poets.

Becoming Part of Carcosa

The investigators must figure out what happened and how to undo it before it's too late. The investigators have six hours before they, the NPCs, and The Lakeside coffee house become part of Carcosa forever. For every half of an hour that the investigators and NPCs spend in Carcosa, they must make a **Sanity** check and lose 1/1D4 points. Keepers should keep close track of the time that their investigators spend trying to escape.

During the 2nd and 3rd hours in Carcosa, the investigators start hearing strange whispers, seeing shadows out of the corners of their eyes, or have gaps in their memories form (basically forgetting what happened over the last 1D10 minutes). During the 4th and 5th hours, things begin to change: peoples' clothing changes (becomes reminiscent of ornate, otherworldly renaissance fashions), their physical appearance begin changing (becoming older or younger and taking on strange, elongated alien features), and the physical layout of the coffee house morphs (coming to resemble the strange, alien architecture of the buildings surrounding it). In the sixth hour, the NPCs, with the exception of Sophie McKendric, mutate and go mad. They try to murder anyone who has not yet been consumed by the influence of Carcosa.

Returning to Earth

Investigators can return to Earth by following three steps. They must first find the copy of *The King in Yellow* in the coffee house's library. There are highlighted passages in the book in three different highlighter shades; yellow, green and blue. When discovered, they must be read in the order of the spectral colors: yellow, then green, then blue. This reveals the following message (see *Poetry Night Investigator Handout #1*).

This message describes how to conduct the ritual and that it can be reversed:

Step One: Recite the "Song of Cassilda".

Step Two: Recite the chant.

Step Three: Someone must die to power the spell.

- Step One is easy; recite the "Song of Cassilda" as it appears in *The King in Yellow*.
- Step Two is harder, as the strange chant Ron recited does not appear in the book. However, Elvira Saunders says that she recorded his performance on her phone. "If I had my phone, we could play back the chant." Recovering everyone's electronic devices and weapons is both possible and necessary to escape from Carcosa (see **The Bag**, nearby).
- Step Three requires a Yellow Sign to be drawn, the chant to be recited, and a human life to be sacrificed. (See **The Reverse Ritual**, below).

The Store Room

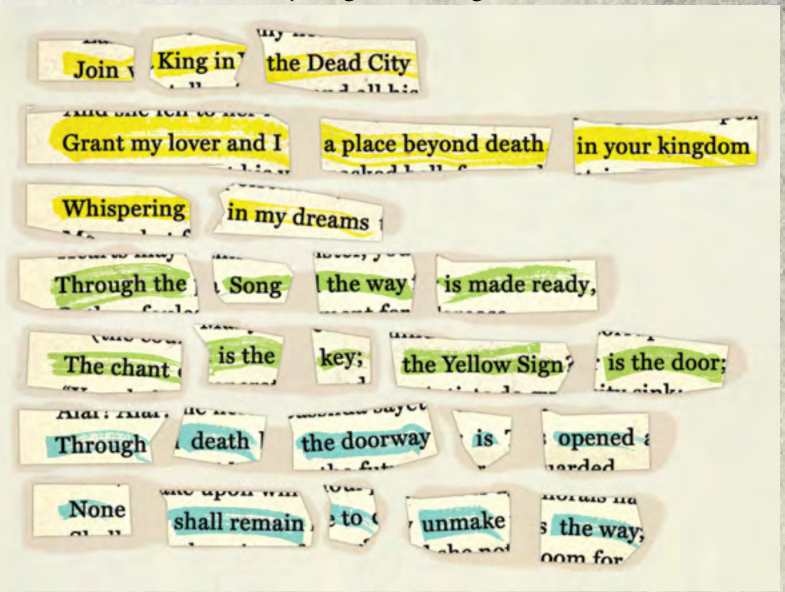
Investigators searching the coffee house find a locked storage closet. Those making a **Listen** check hear someone moving around inside. The door is easily forced open. Inside hides Sophie McKendric, pretending to be traumatized and confused, but those making a successful **Psychology** roll realize she is hiding something. Once discovered, she tries to keep a low profile, while subtly working against the effort to return to Earth.

The Bag

Investigators searching the coffee house notice that the glass door leading to what used to be the deck is unlocked and ajar. Halfway between the back door and the edge of the boardwalk (beyond which is the dark, misty Lake of Hali) rests a large tote bag with The Lakeside's logo. Inside of the bag is everyone's missing weapons and electronic devices. It has been pushed into clear sight to be a more attractive lure.

Getting the bag takes three rounds: one to run out there, another to grab the bag, and a third to run back inside. However, a creature lurking just offshore hungrily waits for someone to try. It lashes out with immense tentacles, covered hooked suckers, that attempt to grab and drag victims into the lake.

Poetry Night Investigator Handout #1



Join King in the Dead City
Grant my lover and I a place beyond death in your kingdom
Whispering in my dreams
Through the Song the way is made ready,
The chant is the key; the Yellow Sign is the door;
Through death the doorway is opened
None shall remain to unmake the way;

On the first round one tentacle attacks, on the second round two attack, then three on the third, and so on. Each tentacle attacks until they suffer six points of damage, whereupon that particular tentacle withdraws, or all targets are back inside the coffee house. Anyone constricted is pulled under the surface of the water to be drowned, if the constricting doesn't prove fatal. A single person can be attacked by up to three tentacles.

The Betrayal

If the investigators figure everything out and begin to conduct the ritual, Sophie makes her move. If she still has her revolver, then she begins firing it at the investigator leading the ritual. If the weapon has been taken from her, she tries to get a large knife from the kitchen and use that. Sophie may wait until one of the other patrons become corrupted and turns murderous to provide a distraction, as they don't attack her because they view her as one of their own (although they won't obey her).

The Reverse Ritual

Once the ritual begins, strange things begin happening. During the "Song of Cassilda", reality undergoes a tug of war, as altered items and forms begin to return to their original state. Everything become blurry, the ground trembles, there are flashes of light and bursts of sparks in midair, and gusts of wind shatter the windows inward.

During the recitation of the chant and the drawing of the Yellow Sign, the door shatters inward and mist fills the room. A hunchbacked figure shambles into the room. It screams at everyone in an alien language, pointing with one hand and holding a proclamation in the other. As the chant ends, it waves a bright light and total darkness washes over everyone. During the strobe like effect, the hunchback vanishes and is replaced by a tall figure wearing a pallid mask and tattered robes of filthy yellow. *The King in Yellow* has arrived, and before any human sacrifice can take place, he takes off his mask. Anyone seeing the unmasking must make a **SAN** check and lose 1D2/1D10 **SAN**.

The Sacrifice

Someone must die in order for the spell to be successful. This can be one of the mutated and insane NPCs, or Sophie McKendric, if the investigators had the forethought to capture any of them alive. If none of these options remain, then one of the investigators must give their life for the others to escape. If the sacrifice is not made, the ritual fails and everyone remains in Carcosa. Once the sacrifice is made, the sensory overload becomes too intense and everyone passes out.

Returning to Earth

The investigators awaken to rushing water and confusion. The water is quickly filling the Lakeside, which is now 25 feet below the surface of Juniper Lake. While their escape should be frightening and chaotic, there is little danger of drowning unless the investigators do not know how to swim. The place where the Lakeside once stood is now nothing but a stand of ancient trees, and no one on Earth has any recollection that such a place ever existed. Whether the investigators have been put back in the same time era as the one from which they left is up to the Keeper.

Rewards and Repercussions

Safely returning to Earth, each investigator gains +1D6 **SAN.** For every NPC who returns to Earth with the investigators gains each investigator 1D4 **SAN.**

CORRUPTED HUMANS

STR 80 CON 80 SIZ 65 INT n/a POW 50
DEX 35 HP 14
Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 7

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 30% (15/6), damage 1D6+db

Defenses: 1-point rubbery hide.
Sanity Loss: 0/1 point to see a corrupted human.

SOPHIE MCKENDRIC, Doesn't Get a Tip

STR 50 CON 60 SIZ 50 INT 60 POW 45
DEX 65 APP 60 EDU 40 SAN 0 HP 12
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 25% (12/5), damage 1D3+db.

Firearms (Handgun) 40% (20/8), .38 automatic: 1 or 3/round, damage 1D10, 15 yards, malfunction 99, capacity 8

Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills: Fast Talk 55%, Stealth 65%
Defenses: None above base.
Spells: none.

TENTACLES FROM THE LAKE

STR 100 CON 80 SIZ 40 INT 35 POW 50
DEX 50 HP 12
Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 2
Move: 9

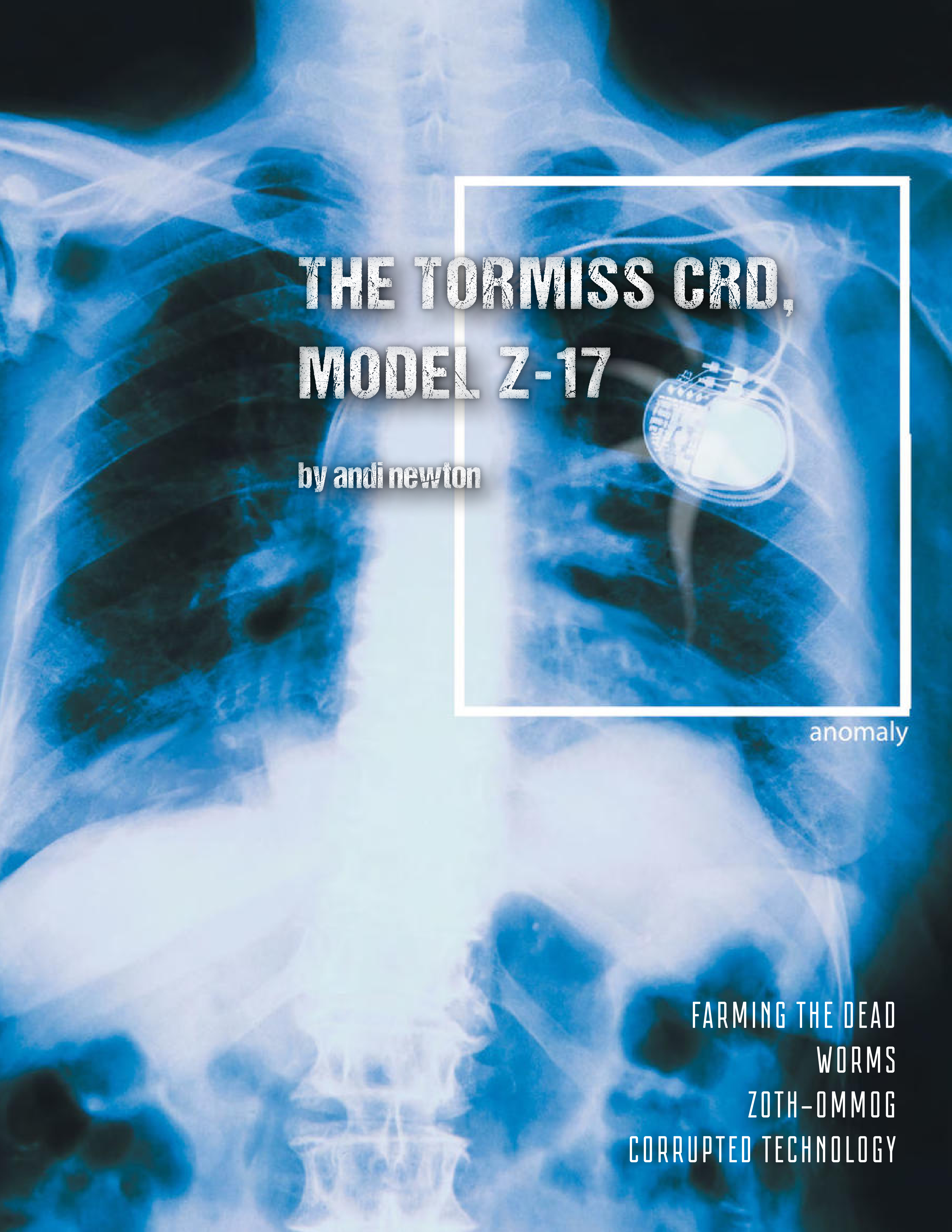
ATTACKS

Fighting (Constrict) 50%, damage 1D6+db

Defenses: 1-point rubbery hide.
Sanity Loss: 1/1D4 Sanity Points to see a Tentacle from the Lake.

THE TORMISS CRD, MODEL Z-17

by andi newton



FARMING THE DEAD
WORMS
ZOTH-OMMOG
CORRUPTED TECHNOLOGY

Introduction

Six years ago, the Tormiss CRD Model Z-17 pacemaker passed U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) trials and was released to market. Since then, it has become a popular and well-accepted pacemaker with cardiologists throughout the United States. Some of the popularity is due to a widespread marketing campaign by the Tormiss Medical Group. But it's also true that patients report fewer problems and faster recoveries with the Tormiss Z-17 than with any other pacemaker available. More importantly, while as many as ten percent of cardiac patients with pacemakers from other manufacturers die, a surprising zero patients with the Tormiss Z-17 have later died of cardiac failure.

The Tormiss Medical Group is now looking to expand into the Canadian and European markets. Approval in Canada is all but a given, and the European Commission is expected to render a decision within the next few months. Which means that if the investigators don't figure out the device's true purpose, and a way to stop it, a new breed of servitors of Zoth-Ommog will soon spread throughout the world.

Involving the Investigators

The investigators are brought in after a Mythos-tainted pacemaker is removed from a deceased woman at a local funeral home. In addition to the classic reporter or private investigator, an investigator could be:

- An employee at the funeral home.
- A doctor or researcher from the CDC.
- A member of the dead woman's family.
- A government inspector from the FDA or foreign medical device approval body.
- An employee from a rival medical device company.
- A Congressional aide who suspects that Tormiss bribed officials to get approval.

TRACK MARKS

The CDC also plays a prominent role in "**Phlebotomy,**" and this might be a suitable scenario to introduce investigators intended for that scenario to the Mythos.

A Disturbing Discovery at the Crematorium

Edward Uhlfelder was good at removing pacemakers. After all, he'd been working at Crestview Mortuary for eighteen years. Considering how many people had pacemakers, and that pacemakers had to be removed before a body could be cremated, he took out a few hundred a year, at least. Some quick, back of the envelope math meant that he'd probably taken out a good six thousand or so over the years. But he'd never seen anything like the one he removed from Raina Poole, recently deceased following a head-on collision, after a west-bound pickup drifted into the east-bound lane of SR-62 outside Julian, NC.

At first, the pacemaker looked pretty standard. The main body of the device was implanted below the collarbone. Two wire leads went through an artery into the heart. Only, when Edward tried to pull the leads out, he couldn't. He thought they'd gotten stuck. He'd even checked the late Mrs. Poole's paperwork to see if she had stents that they could have snagged on. But when he looked closer, Edward realized that the leads, if that's what they really were, hadn't gotten stuck. They'd grown into the woman's arteries. And when he cut through the leads, he didn't find any metal inside to conduct an electrical pulse. He just found a clear, viscous liquid.

Then, the end of the lead closest to the pacemaker began wriggling around and burrowed back into Mrs. Poole's artery. That's when Edward decided to call the CDC. But not before he posted a quick Facebook Live video. After all, everyone deserves their fifteen minutes of fame.

Zeiler-Danworth Funeral Home and Crematorium

The director of the funeral home, Arlene Cherney, will confirm that it's standard to remove a pacemaker before cremation. Otherwise, the battery could explode, causing severe damage to the crematorium and even injury to personnel. After removal, such devices are disposed of as medical waste, returned to the next of kin, or sent to a charity to recycle for use in developing countries. Cherney can give the investigators contact information for their medical waste disposal company and the recycling charity, but neither of them has ever received a Tormiss Z-17 before. Cherney is unwilling to give out information for any next of kin, but she will say that the pacemaker from the Facebook video was going to be disposed as medical waste, per the family's wishes.

The mortician who posted the video has been terminated. Cherney will give the investigators his name and home address.

Going through Official Channels

With the proper connections, the investigators can get information from the FDA and the CDC about the Tormiss Z-17 and the incident at the funeral home. The information is a public record, but without the right connections, the players must submit a file request to the FDA which takes about a week for them to respond via electronic file download. The CDC is a much tougher nut to crack; without proper law enforcement credentials, the investigators must file a Freedom of Information Act request which will take months to generate a response (longer if Tormiss meddles, which they will).

The FDA will provide the paperwork that the Tormiss Medical Group submitted when they applied for approval of the pacemaker—it is patented, and this is a public record. This includes the device specifications and plans, patent information, and the results of clinical trials. No mention is made, of course, of any parasite in the device or the virus-laden fluid it excretes. It's not included in either the detailed drawings of the device, the pictures of the one sent to the FDA, or the patent that the Tormiss Medical Group holds on it. The clinical trials showed no negative side effects other than mild aches and fevers during the initial recovery period after the pacemaker was implanted, which is not unusual. These cleared up in all subjects within one month.

The CDC did not quarantine the funeral home. Instead, they contacted the Tormiss Medical Group, which assured them that the fluid is a harmless, saline-based liquid used to conduct the electrical current through the leads instead of a wire. (This incident report is not a public record because it is still under investigation.) The CDC is initially unaware that this configuration does not match the documentation sent to the FDA by Tormiss Medical, but if someone calls this to their attention, they become very interested and want to know everything that the investigators know. It may be possible then to **Fast Talk** or **Persuade** some information out of the CDC about what Tormiss had to say for itself.

If the investigators have contacts with either Health Canada or the European Council, the Canadian and European agencies responsible for approving medical devices in their locales, they will learn that those applications contained the same documentation as was sent to the FDA False exemplars meeting the blueprints are what are being subjected to clinical trials and regulatory inspectors.

Breaching Doctor-Patient Confidentiality

Cardiologists who have placed the Tormiss Z-17 in patients will refuse to speak to the investigators because of doctor-patient confidentiality—even if the investigators aren't asking about a specific patient. Financial documents reveal that these doctors receive periodic payments from Tormiss Medical as "consulting fees." The doctors don't know anything about the cult or its plans to create a new servitor race, but will, under pressure, admit that the leads in the Tormiss Z-17 seemed unusual. The money was enough to convince them to buy the company line that the leads were made out of a new material. The doctors have seen nothing unusual in their routine monitoring of patients' pacemakers. **Law** rolls are especially useful in getting the doctors to talk (with a bonus die if coming from someone who can threaten their medical licenses).

Patients are also reluctant to talk to the investigators, especially those who have had the pacemaker longer. Patients who have been fully converted to servitors cannot be persuaded at all, and might even attack the investigators. Newer patients who are persuaded to talk will admit to having a fever and general feeling of malaise for a few weeks after the surgery, but were assured by their doctors that this wasn't uncommon. Since then, they've felt perfectly fine. Better than they have in years, in fact.

After visiting either the cardiologists or their patients, the investigators can expect to be attacked by cultists, who don't want anyone interfering with their plans.

The Tormiss Medical Group

Located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the Tormiss Medical Group is the sole tenant of the Simek Building, a former tobacco warehouse on the edge of downtown. The first two floors house the company's administrative and sales offices. Most of the top floor is taken up by server racks, with a small tech support team to field incoming help calls from both in-house personnel and doctors' offices. From the ground floor up, plus the first basement level, everything about Tormiss seems like a standard medical device company. The second of the below-ground levels is a different story. There is a total of about 50 employees.

If the investigators visit the facility during the day, the facility is full of employees, both office personnel and researchers. If they visit at night, most of the employees are gone other than night shift support techs on the top floor, a few researchers in the two basement levels, and roaming security guards. Unfortunately for the investigators, absolutely everyone who works for Tormiss is a cultist, and some of them have been implanted with the Tormiss Z-17.

Two below-ground levels were added after Tormiss Medical bought the building in 1997. The first sub-level houses their research and development department. Other than the Tormiss Z-17, the medical devices developed and manufactured by the company are all strictly legitimate, providing the cult with both the cover to undertake its real plans and the funds to do so. A variety of medical devices, from heart monitors to hip replacements, are developed and tested here before progressing to human trials. Most devices developed in this lab are manufactured elsewhere, typically in China or India.

The second sub-basement is not only where the Tormiss Z-17 was developed, but is also where it's manufactured. This level doesn't look anything like a normal lab or clean-room manufacturing facility. It has four large rooms separated by a wide hall down the middle. The northwest room is filled with shelving units stacked high with Tormiss Z-17 pacemakers. In addition to labeling for Canada and various EU countries, the investigators find boxes for Russia, Mexico, India, China, and Australia. Apparently Tormiss is planning to expand its reach even further than the investigators had realized.

The northeast room is a fully functional research lab. Here the investigators can find evidence of other types of medical devices that incorporate the same parasite as in the Tormiss Z-17. They'll also find cages filled with lab animals, some of which have been implanted with various devices. Some of the cages are empty, their bars ripped apart as if in an adrenalin-fueled rage. A glassed-in area of this room is fitted with six hospital beds. Test subjects for new Tormiss implant designs lie in two of the beds. One has been implanted with a corrupted artificial hip, the other with a corrupted surgical mesh. So far, these haven't proven as successful at conversion as the Tormiss Z-17.

The southeast room is where the pacemakers are assembled. Dozens of workstations dominate the space, each littered with components.

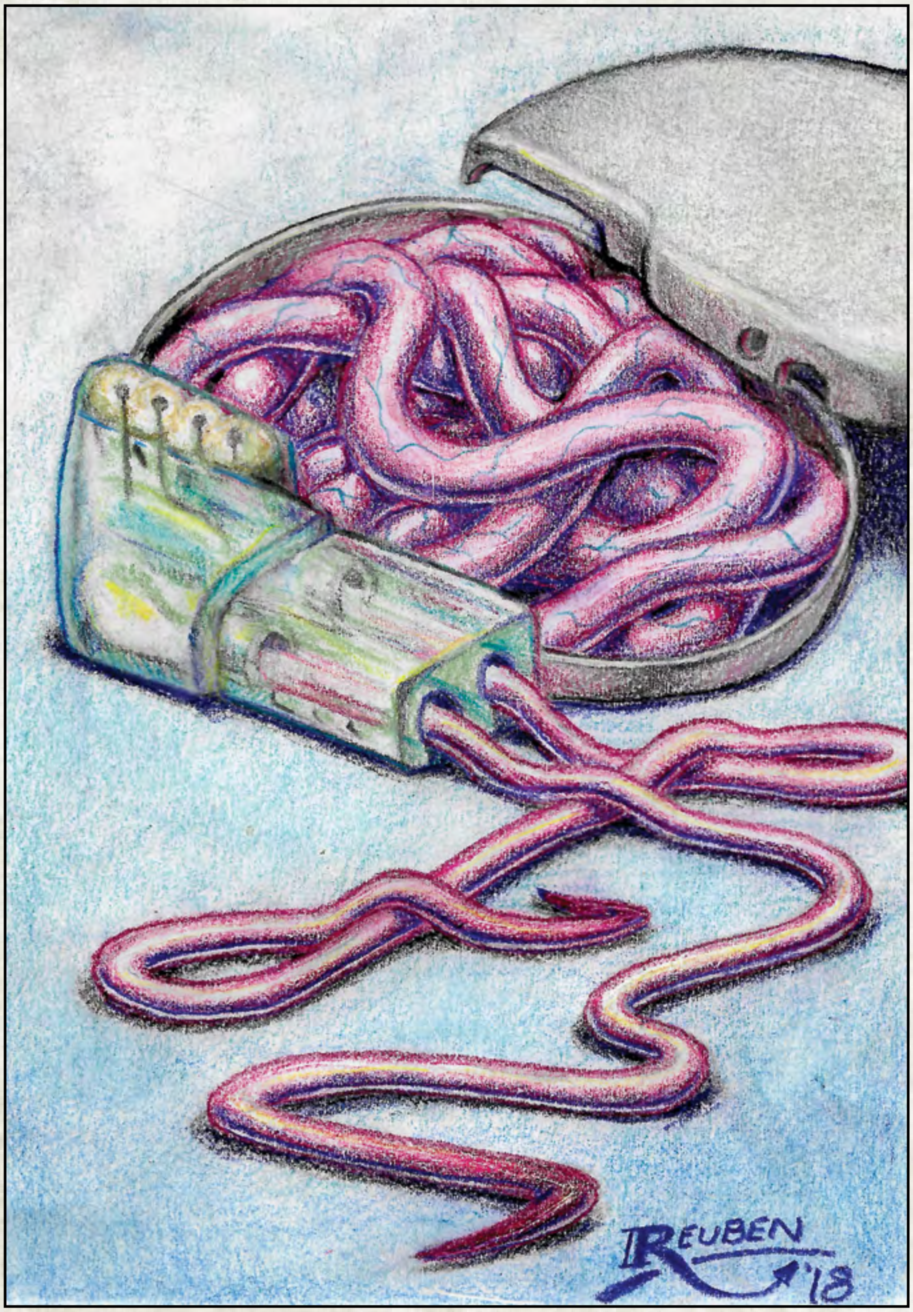
Unlike the rest of the level, the southwest room is completely dark. The lights aren't just off; there are no lights here. The walls are unfinished and the floor is natural stone, as if this part of the sub-basement was chiseled out of bedrock. The only thing here is a massive Yugg. As the investigators watch, cysts form on its body. Each cyst swells until it ruptures and releases a parasite. Conveyor belts ferry them to waiting tanks along the walls. **SAN** loss for this tableau (including for seeing the Yugg) is 1/1D8.

In addition to any other steps they take, the investigators will need to destroy the incubator Yugg to keep the cult from producing more of the Tormiss Z-17, or from developing the other medical devices they plan to use to create the new servitors.

The Tormiss Cardiac Rhythm Device (CRD) Model Z-17

If the investigators disassemble an implanted Tormiss Z-17, or one found in the sub-basement, they find what at first appears to be the standard circuitry and lithium battery for a pacemaker. If they pry open the inner casing that would normally contain the motherboard and processors, they find what appears to be a small, white flatworm, coiled tightly around itself. The two "leads" that get inserted into a patient's heart are actually the worm's appendages. These appendages excrete a clear fluid that, when viewed under a microscope, contains billions of viral organisms.

A biopsy of lymph nodes from a patient implanted with a Tormiss Z-17 will show more of these organisms. Careful examination will reveal that the organisms are converting the patient's own T-cells into more of themselves. Over time, the patient's lymph nodes begin to produce these organisms in favor of T-cells. Eventually, the organisms flood the patient's brain and neurological systems, forcing the person's compliance with orders from Father Ubb and Zoth-Ommog. The organisms also increase the production of adrenalin and muscle cells, giving the new servitor extraordinary strength and pain tolerance.



Crossing the Cultists

Once they start looking into the Tormiss Z-17, the investigators can come up against the cultists behind Tormiss Medical at any time. This can come in the form of roadblocks trying to get information, harassment from authorities, or even physical attacks. The closer that the investigators get to figuring out what's going on and stopping the cult's plans, the more overt the attacks become, escalating to attempts on their lives.

In addition, any investigator who goes off by himself, or is separated from the rest of their group, runs the risk of being snatched by the cultists and implanted with one of the tainted pacemakers. When the investigator wakes up later, either at the Tormiss facility or back home, they will find a small incision in their chest below their left clavicle. If they don't remove the pacemaker, the investigator will feel vaguely sick and feverish for the next few weeks, then have a period of normalcy before feeling the draw to find and free Zoth-Ommog. After that, the investigator will start receiving, and acting on, orders from Father Ubb—even if the cultists are stopped.

Success and Failure

The key to stopping the cultists is to destroy both the research that they did developing the Tormiss Z-17, and their ability to produce more medical devices. Destroying the Yugg at the Tormiss facility is less important, as the cultists can get another incubator to replace that one. Burning the server bank at the company's facility is a step in the right direction, but some research lives on in the minds of absent cultists and/or on backup servers. The investigators will also need to find some way to deal with the people who have already been implanted with the pacemaker. They could do this in a number of ways, including:

- Getting a list of patients and tracking them down one by one.
- Getting the FDA to file a medical device recall (which, in connection with an unfortunate fire at the Tormiss facility or similar "accident," is about the best that most investigators will be able to achieve).
- Developing a serum to destroy both the organism in the pacemaker and trigger the immune system to attack the organisms already in person's body, deploying this in the guise of a flu shot or other vaccination.
- Hacking the pacemaker's remote monitoring programming to use the internal battery to electrocute the organism. (This will require access to the server banks plus an Extreme **Computer Use** roll with a penalty die to do quickly, or take weeks of effort plus an Extreme **Computer Use** roll.)

This won't be easy and odds are the investigators will miss some people, particularly those who have had the implant long enough to be full servitors. It would be best for the investigators to concentrate first on finding women of child-bearing age with the implant, since any child they have will have been exposed to the organism for nine months while in the womb, and will be born as a full servitor.

If the investigators fail to destroy the Tormiss facility and its research, the cult will not only begin selling the Tormiss Z-17 worldwide, but will also develop other medical devices for the same purpose. Within ten years, there will be millions of these new servitors, determined to free Zoth-Ommog... and at that point they will be unstoppable.

Rewards and Repercussions

If the investigators shut down the Tormiss facility, they gain 1D6 **SAN**. If they fail, they lose 1D4 **SAN**. If they also succeed in counteracting a significant number of the pacemakers that have already been implanted in people, they gain an additional 1D6 **SAN**. If they fail, they lose an additional 1D6 **SAN**.

INCUBATOR YUGG

STR 140	CON 100	SIZ 145	INT 55	POW 70
DEX 40				HP 49

Damage bonus: +3D6
Build: 4
Move: 2

ATTACKS

Fighting (Bite) 40% (20/8), damage db+2D10 STR drain

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: none above base.
Defenses: 3-point rubbery hide
Spells: Breath of the Deep, Contact Zoth-Ommog, Implant Fear
SAN Loss: 0/1D6

SERVITORS AND CULTISTS

STR 110	CON 95	SIZ 90	INT 65	POW 60
DEX 85				HP 18

Damage bonus: +1D6
Build: 2
Move: 8

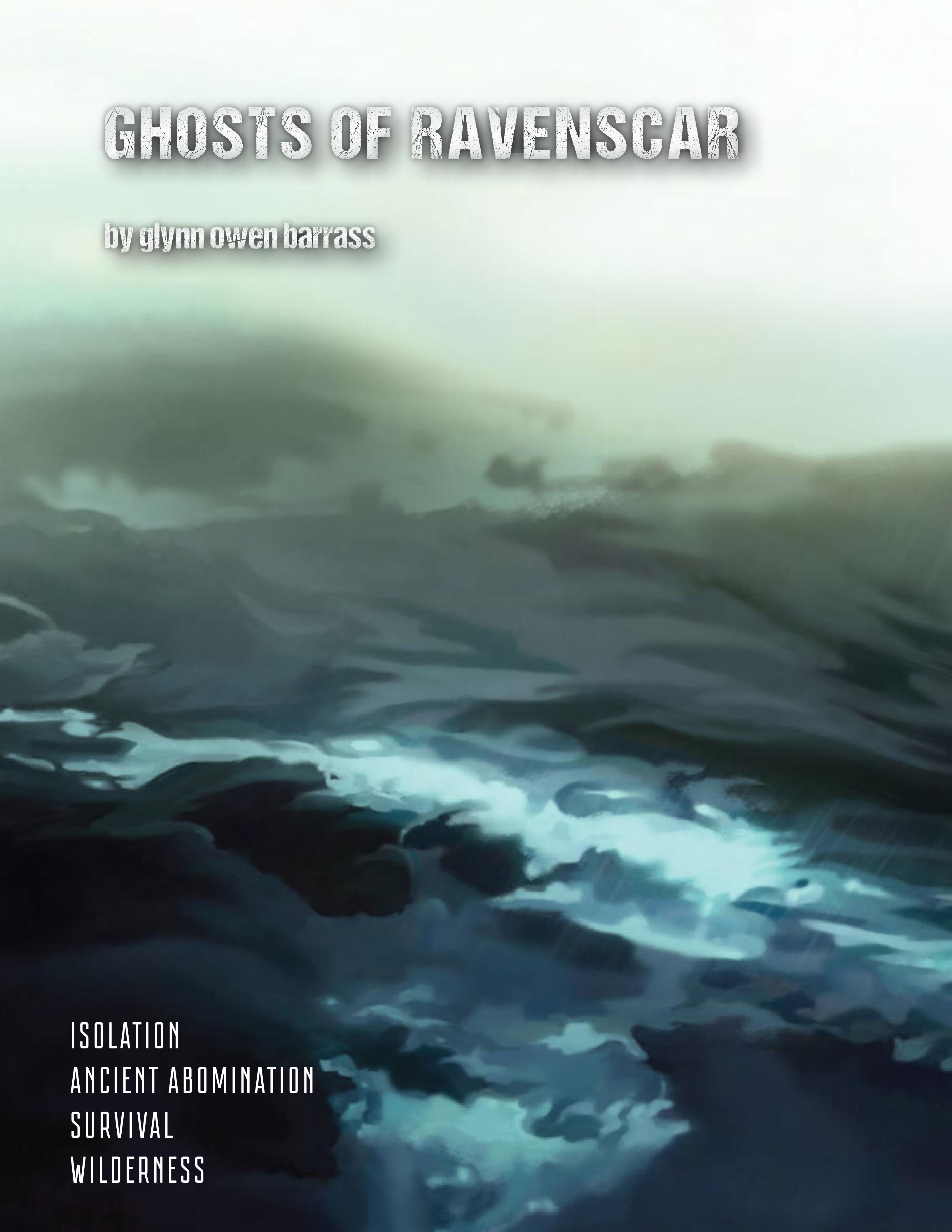
ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10), damage 1D6+db

Firearms (Handgun) 35% (17/7), .38 automatic: 1 or 3/round, 1D10, 15 yards, malfunction 99, capacity 8

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%.
Spells: Any desired by the Keeper
SAN Loss: none.



GHOSTS OF RAVENSCAR

by glynn owen barrass

ISOLATION
ANCIENT ABOMINATION
SURVIVAL
WILDERNESS

Introduction

THE SCENARIO TAKES PLACE IN RAVENSCAR, AN ABANDONED VILLAGE IN THE NORTHEASTERN PART OF ENGLAND. THE VILLAGE, HISTORICALLY, HAD VERY FEW HABITATIONS TO BEGIN WITH. AT THE TURN OF THE 20TH CENTURY, PLANS WERE BROUGHT IN TO TRANSFORM RAVENSCAR INTO A HOLIDAY RESORT. SEWERS AND ROADS WERE LAID, A FEW HOUSES WERE BUILT, BUT VARIOUS MISHAPS HALTED THE CONSTRUCTION, AND RAVENSCAR WAS LEFT A GHOST TOWN.

Of the few structures that remain, there is a church, some scattered houses, and Raven Hall. Built in 1774, Raven Hall housed the family of Dr. Edward Grey, a wealthy man who treated George III and other rich patrons. He and his wife Sarah had a son whom many deemed eccentric, Dr. Richard Grey. He became owner of the property upon his father's passing in 1845. He's still there.

Grey was a man obsessed with the outré, and he studied forbidden and lost tomes that led to contact with beings from beyond the veil. One being (known as "Shrieker" in the scenario) haunts the locale of Ravenscar, while Grey, hundreds of years old now and more revenant than man, remains cloistered in Raven Hall.

Shrieker is a Servitor of the Outer Gods, summoned and bound by Grey two centuries past. The entity taught him some spells and secrets, but its continuous use of its power, the Music of Madness, turned Grey into its servitor. The pair are now inextricably linked and prey on anyone that strays near Ravenscar. Both take a perverse pleasure in terrifying and killing their unwary victims. It is up to the investigators to survive the assaults and somehow put an end to Grey and Shrieker.

Involving the Investigators

The investigators arrive in Ravenscar in search of someone who has disappeared. They can be either friends or relatives of the missing person, or private investigators. The identity of the missing person is up to the Keeper, but they will not be found alive. The friend/relative has been missing for a week, after disappearing on a hiking trip. A text message saying: "Weather is bad now. Wish I'd stayed home. Near old Ravenscar," is the last anyone heard of them. The police claim to have searched Ravenscar and its surroundings and say the hiker has probably gotten lost on the moors and died. As this scenario is set in the United Kingdom, investigators are not legally allowed to carry firearms. Knives are not out of the question however.

It is suggested the investigators arrive at night, and the weather is not too harsh, at first, just a light spatter of rainfall but with ominous black clouds overhead. Of the village itself, they encounter what amounts to a bleak, wide-open space, with thick overgrown grass and shrubberies bisected by streets that are slowly being overtaken by nature. A few buildings are visible here and there, the most prominent being St. Hilda's Church, located in the northeastern part of the village, and Raven Hall, which stands to the south. A long line of cliffs, covered in trees, surrounds the northern area of Ravenscar. The cliffs lead to a prodigious drop to the rocky beach below.

Welcome to Ravenscar

When the investigators arrive in Ravenscar, Shrieker (who has the spell *Detect Life* as an innate ability), will detect them and inform Grey. Shrieker will then stalk the investigators wherever they go, using the sewer system below town. Grey and Shrieker will cast their *Alter Weather* spells and the rain will turn torrential. Thunder cracks in the sky and icy cold winds attack the investigators. They will be given a choice: remain in the maelstrom, or find shelter somewhere. If the investigators studied weather reports before going (or check them on their smartphones), this torrential downpour runs contrary to the weather forecast. Alternatively, a **Natural World** check suggests that something is amiss with the weather; the storm appeared much too quickly.

EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS

Due to the torrential rain and battering wind, each investigator's MOV is reduced to a quarter of its original number, rounded up. Also, because of the savage elements, each investigator must make a successful **CON** roll every 10 rounds or lose 1 HP. If an investigator is stuck outside for 20 successive rounds, they can be considered as being 'soaked to the skin,' and continue to lose 1 HP (to a maximum of half of their initial HP) until they find a source of warmth to dry themselves off.

In the centuries that Shrieker has stalked Ravenscar, it has dug scores of holes connecting the village to the sewers—every building contains at least one entrance. Thus, no matter where the investigators go, Shrieker will eventually catch up with them. It will use its *Music of Madness* power, physical assaults, and spells to chase the investigators where it wants them to go: the decaying ruins of Raven Hall. It may attempt to grab an investigator and drag them down into the sewers, taking its unlucky victim to Raven Hall. If the investigators try to leave the area altogether, Shrieker will use an external hole to appear and bar their escape.

In the attempt to lure the investigators to Raven Hall, Grey uses an old, hand-cranked air raid siren. Not long after the investigators arrival, he leans out of one of the mansion's windows and begins to operate the siren, releasing its eerie wail into the storm. Because of its echoes and the interference from the storm, an Extreme **Listen** roll is required to detect the location the siren is coming from.

Internet Research

When the investigators have safe shelter from the storm (and Shrieker, if they have already encountered it), they may want to perform some Internet research concerning Ravenscar. If the investigators have cellphones or laptops, Internet connection is spotty because of the storm, so have them make a Hard **Luck** roll to gain each piece of information below. The Keeper should give information depending on what search parameters the investigators use.

Internet Information

- Ravenscar was named such by Viking settlers. It is supposedly built upon Viking ruins.
- There is a vampire legend surrounding Raven Hall. This has a small mention on Wikipedia, citing a book named *Yorkshire Legends and Traditions, as Told by Her Ancient Chroniclers* by Thomas Parkinson, published in 1888.
- The ruins of an old Roman signal station are said to be located somewhere on the cliffs to the north of the village.

Calling the Authorities

A phone connection when trying to call out is difficult due to the storm, so have the investigators need a Hard **Luck** roll to get a successful connection. The nearest police station is many miles away, and if contacted, they explain that due to the weather they won't be able to get a car there for hours. If the investigators start talking about monsters or other strange things, the police will assume it is a crank call and no one will be sent out.

St. Hilda's Church

A low stone wall surrounds the church and ancient, weathered gravestones spot the churchyard within. The main building, constructed from dark brown bricks, has a tall, gabled roof with a cross looking down upon the entrance to the churchyard and the path. The entrance into the nave is located on the west side of the building. The eastern side holds a one-story wing, which once housed the priest. The wing, and its gable roof, have two windows to a side, top and bottom. There is a door located on the eastern side of the wing. The church windows are boarded up, as are the doors. The windows on the first floor of the wing are reachable. The boards each have STR 50, and the glass behind them will have to be broken to get inside. The door to the nave is heavily secured—the board has STR 100. The door behind it is unlocked. The door on the east wing is much weaker and has no boards covering it. It has STR 50 or could be picked.

If the investigators enter from the west side, they find a small chamber. It holds a porcelain font with a little dirty holy water at the bottom and nothing else. It has an eastern door that opens up onto the nave. The nave is lined with two rows of pews, facing the pulpit and altar at the northern end. It is pitch black so investigators will have to provide their own light source. Exploration reveals a few rotted hymnals, an empty whisky bottle behind the pulpit, and a door on the east side. It is locked and has STR 75, or it could be picked. A **Spot Hidden** roll will reveal that the floorboards to the left of the altar appear weak and to have been previously removed. If an investigator strays onto them, have them make a **Luck** roll, or their feet will fall through, causing 1D3 damage from splinters. A gaping hole into darkness is below the floorboards and a fetid stink issues from it.

Keeper's Note: *From the moment that the investigators enter the nave, they have 1D10+10 rounds before Shrieker arrives. Shrieker will burst through the floorboards to the left of the altar, or perhaps even catch an investigator trying to explore the hole.*

The door on the east side leads to the rectory. Everything on the first floor is in darkness. Bare floorboards line the floors, and peeling white wallpaper, patchy with mildew, cover the walls. A corridor covering the west, south and east of the building accesses two doors to the front room and the kitchen along the south corridor, and the front door on the east side. If the investigators explore the rooms, they find the front room empty, with a stairway leading to the second floor. The kitchen has two sideboards, one containing a rusted saw and a hammer.

The attic holds a narrow bedroom with a small bathroom attached. The windows aren't boarded up, so some light comes in from outside. A cardboard box in the bedroom holds a pile of old hymnals. A further search deeper into the box uncovers four unopened bottles of whisky. A cabinet in the bathroom holds an ivory handled, cutthroat razor.

The Abandoned Houses

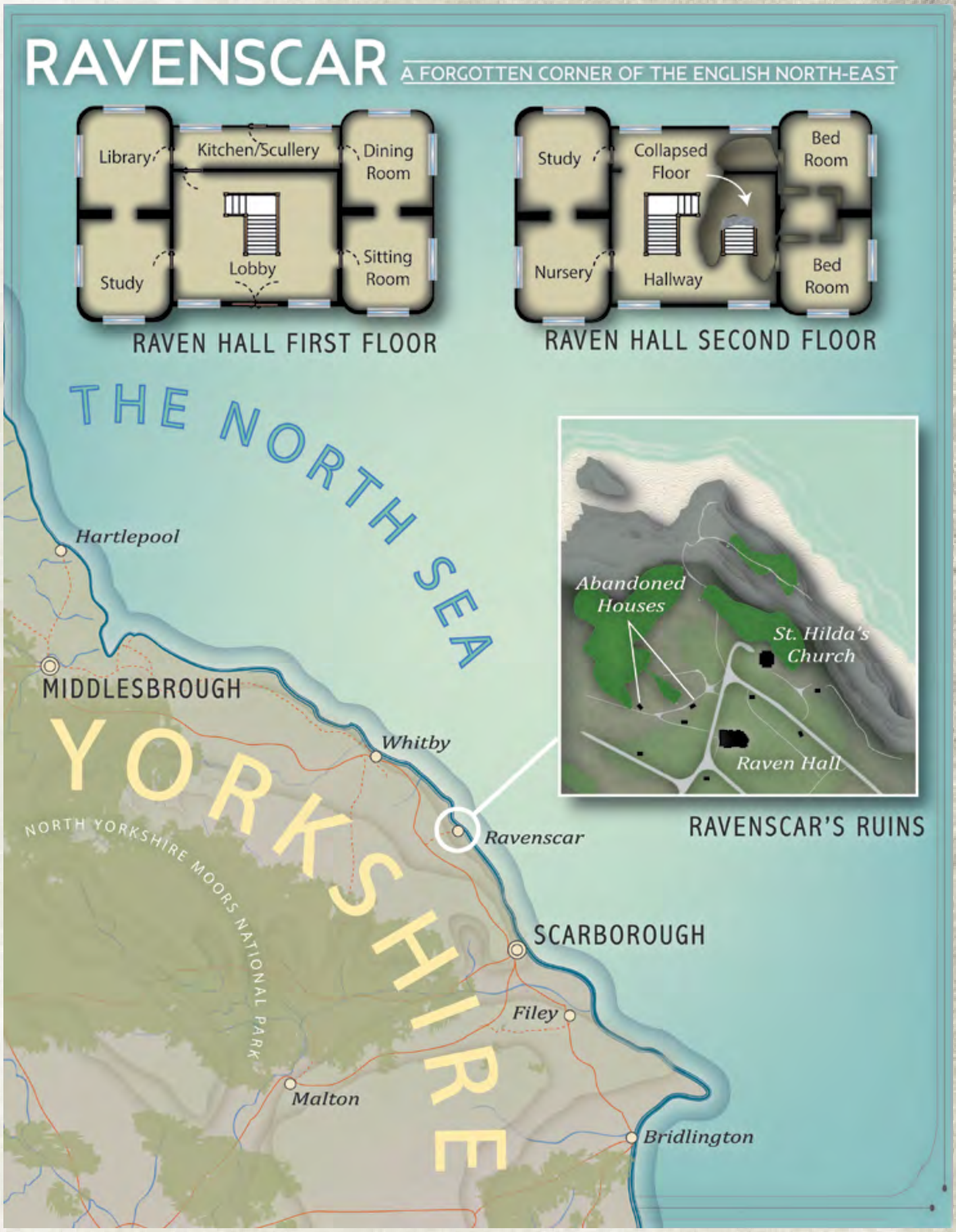
There are abandoned houses dotting Ravenscar and, for the Keeper's convenience, they each have a similar layout. Each house is large, with two stories and gable roofs. The sandstone walls are weathered, the roof tiles filled with holes. The front and back gardens are overgrown with weeds. There are four windows at the front of each house, two up, two down, and a front door between the first-floor windows. The rear of each house has five windows, three up and two down, with a back door between the bottom two. The upstairs windows are broken. Some of the houses will be boarded up downstairs—STR 50 on each window and door.

Keeper's Note:*: The investigators can find some of the missing person's belongings in a house chosen by the Keeper. A successful Spot Hidden role reveals a cellphone, almost out of power, and a badly torn shoe.*

The typical layout of a house is as such: As an investigator enters the front door, they see a wide corridor with a door to the north (this leads to the back garden), the west, and the east. A staircase to the second floor stands against the east wall. The room is dark and dank smelling, with mold covering the bare plaster walls. Some of the plaster has fallen off to reveal bare bricks beneath. The carpet is rotted and squelches underfoot. This description pretty much covers the other rooms in the house. The door to the west leads to a front room. It has a fireplace against the east wall and holds some pieces of collapsed, rotted furniture. If window boards are missing, rain pours in. Shrieker will arrive in this, or any of the other downstairs rooms, in 1D10+10 rounds. It will either come up through a hole in the floor or burst through a window—whichever the Keeper feels will have the most effect. The other downstairs rooms are as follows. The door on the entrance hall's east wall leads to a dining room, with a door on the north wall. This room might hold the remnants of a large wooden dining table, the wood split and spiky. The north door leads to a kitchen empty of furniture but with sagging wooden cabinets lining the walls. None of the houses have basements/cellars.

If the investigators try to go upstairs, they find the stairs creaky and treacherous. Have any investigator over SIZ 65 make a **Luck** roll. Failure means they collapse through the stairs and receive 1D6 damage. The top of the stairs has a window on the north wall, looking down into the back garden, and doors on the west and east walls. Each of these leads to a bedroom. The bedroom on the western side is empty. The eastern bedroom is the same. There are the ruins of beds and some collapsed furniture in some of the houses bedrooms.

***Keeper's Note:**: The sewers beneath Ravenscar are maze-like and narrow. Shrieker can squeeze through them easily, but average-sized humans would find themselves having to crawl on hands and knees in the partially flooded tunnels. Investigators trying to search them will soon wish that they hadn't, especially when Shrieker appears and attacks.*


RAVENSCAR
A FORGOTTEN CORNER OF THE ENGLISH NORTH-EAST
Library
Kitchen/Scullery
Dining Room
Study
Lobby
Sitting Room
RAVEN HALL FIRST FLOOR
Study
Collapsed Floor
Bed Room
Nursery
Hallway
Bed Room
RAVEN HALL SECOND FLOOR
THE NORTH SEA
Hartlepool
MIDDLESBROUGH
Whitby
YORKSHIRE
NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS NATIONAL PARK
Ravenscar
SCARBOROUGH
Filey
Malton
Bridlington
Abandoned Houses
St. Hilda's Church
Raven Hall
RAVENSCAR'S RUINS

Raven Hall

Raven Hall has lights on in some of the windows—the only signs of life in the village. It is four stories high, including the attic, and is constructed from brown sandstone bricks. The center of the roof has caved in, a massive hole open to the elements. The two edges of the front and rear of the building are constructed in semicircles. Six windows line the first floor, with a large double door between them. The second and third floors have six windows. The grey tiled, gable roof is lined with ten windows, five to each side. The sides of the house have four windows to a floor, and the back has a similar arrangement to the front. Many windows are broken, but some are intact. The windows of the third floor have iron bars attached to their exteriors.

***Keeper's Note:**: If Shrieker has taken one of the investigators, he will still be alive, but unconscious, in one of the rooms inside Raven Hall. He will have 1 HP remaining.*

The front doors are unlocked but are jammed (STR 30). The inside layout is as follows.

A large lobby is located in the center of the house; it is an area of paneled wood walls and cracked tiles littered with debris. The ceiling has partially collapsed on the eastern side, making that area thick with broken beams of wood and rubble. It is dark, except for the light the investigators provide. A ceiling chandelier has fallen to the floor between the entrance doors and the staircase. A large wooden staircase stands at the center of the foyer, its ornate banisters leading to a balcony on the second floor. There is a door on the western side of the foyer, a door to the east, and one to the north, to the left of the staircase. The windows are unbroken.

Downstairs Rooms

Unless otherwise described, all rooms have wood paneled walls, with bare floorboards underfoot.

The door to the west leads to a **study**. This room has a door to the east and a double door to its north. The windows are broken, and the room has suffered heavily from the elements. The carpet is soaked and rotten, and all the furniture has collapsed into heaps of junk. A brass storm lantern, flickering as it is almost out of paraffin, stands in the center of the room.

The north doors lead to the **library**. Grey has made some attempts to protect the library from the elements. The windows are boarded up from the inside, STR 50. The walls are lined with oak bookshelves, and a small table flanked by two chairs stands at the center of the room. A lit, silver candlestick holder stands on the table. If the investigators take time to search the bookshelves, they will mostly be disappointed. The books are dedicated to local history, genealogical tracts, early nineteenth century fiction, and gardening. Many are in Latin. There is however a copy of *Yorkshire Legends and Traditions, as Told by Her Ancient Chroniclers*, by Thomas Parkinson, published in 1888. It is indexed and the Wikipedia referenced entry on Raven Hall's vampire legend can be quickly found. The legend claims that the "vampire" is deterred by holy water.

STEAL LIFE (DEEPER VERSION)

Cost: 15 magic points; 1D20 Sanity points (Zero in Grey's case)
Casting time: 1+ rounds
This devilishly cruel spell drains life from a victim. For the spell to take effect, the caster must succeed in an opposed **POW** roll with the target. With a success, the target begins to age and decay while still alive, the innate life and vitality transforming into **POW** and draining into the sorcerer. Each round after the spell is cast, the target loses 1D10 points each of **STR**, **CON**, **DEX**, **POW**, and **APP**. For every 5 characteristic points drained, the caster gains 1 **POW**. Meanwhile, the target withers: flesh turns grey and begins to flake away until, at the full conclusion of the spell, the target has become a horrid dry husk which costs 1/1D6 Sanity points just to see. The sorcerer may end the spell before death occurs in the target—the victim's skin pale and paper-like, limbs withered and gnarled.

Note that if the caster is slain before the victim dies, the spell cancels and the victim's lost characteristic points return to him or her. Or, perhaps not.

There is a door on the south wall, to the study, and one on the east wall, leading to the kitchen/scullery.

The kitchen is wide, with doors on the west and east walls, leading to the study and dining room respectively, a door to the south, leading to the lobby, and a door to the north, which opens out onto the back garden. The windows here are unbroken. This room has a large table at its center, covered in dark stains and deep gouges. Cupboards line the walls, empty but for mouse droppings. Clusters of dried herbs, including decades-old, wrinkled garlic, hang above the table.

The dining room has double doors on the south wall, leading to the sitting room, and a door on the west wall, leading to the kitchen/scullery. The windows are all open to the elements. The remnants of a dining table and chairs lie collapsed at the room's center. There is a hole in the southeastern corner, partially concealed with trash. Shrieker will use this to enter Raven Hall, within 1D20+10 rounds of the investigators' arrival.

The sitting room is empty, and has a large, rotted fur rug on the floor. Beneath the rug is a hole which Shrieker may use, or an investigator may fall down, for 1D6 damage, before getting stuck. A pair of double doors on the north wall leads to the dining room; on the west: the main entry hall. The windows here are broken and open to the elements.

The Upstairs

A hallway/balcony stands at the top of the rotted, creaking stairs. It is centered on another staircase, leading to the third floor. There are two doors along the western wall and one near the southeast corner. There is also a short corridor between the eastern walls. The whole east side is inaccessible due to the collapsed floor. If investigators attempt the staircase to the third floor, they find the top of the stairs blocked with rubble. It would take many hours and a lot of danger to remove it.

The door on the northwestern side leads to **another study**. The windows are boarded up from the inside. Tea chests litter the floor, behind which is a makeshift bed made up from old rags and sheets. If the investigators take the time to search the chests, they find clothing rotted to tatters and books turned to mulch.

The door on the southwestern side leads to **a former nursery**. The door is locked, STR 50, or could be picked. Grey has the key on his person. Inside, the windows are boarded up from within. The room is littered with the desiccated corpses of Grey and Shrieker's victims (1/1D8 **SAN** loss to see). There are fourteen corpses here, including that of the missing person the investigators are seeking.

Encountering Grey

Once the investigators enter Raven Hall, Grey will approach them and appear helpful, telling them their missing friend (or friends) is upstairs. Once he has the investigators on the second floor, he will attack by casting *Enthrall Victim*, then *Steal Life*. Shrieker, upon arrival, will use a combination of magical attacks including *Music of Madness*, *Implant Fear*, and *Shriveling*, once the investigators are cornered. Note: Its intention is to cripple the investigators, not kill them.

Shrieker is likely far beyond the investigators' ability to kill. Given Shrieker's abilities, this scenario will likely turn into an extended cat-and-mouse game, with Shrieker stalking, harassing, and herding them toward Grey. They cannot do much to harm Shrieker (which will become quickly apparent), but many investigators will be slightly faster than Shrieker. You should refresh your familiarity with the 7th Edition chase rules and give thought to issues such as closing distances between an investigator and one of Shrieker's sewer access holes, and slipping and falling in the mud and rain. Their best chance at survival is to find and kill Grey. At the Keeper's option, an item found in any exploration of St. Hilda's Church (such as the holy water) may be valuable in dispatching Grey.

Rewards and Repercussions

Destroying Grey gives an award of 1D6 **SAN**; 1D10 should be awarded for the banishing/destruction of Shrieker. If Shrieker or Grey are left to continue their evil deeds, charge 1D6 **SAN** for each.

DR. RICHARD GREY

Long gone insane from his seclusion and arcane dabbling, Dr. Richard Grey can barely pass for human anymore. His skin is deathly pale and clings to his face, giving it a skull-like appearance. He wears a tattered brown suit of Victorian vintage. His great age stems from experimenting with a spell combining *Extend Life* and *Summon/Bind Servitor of the Outer Gods*. This spell brought Shrieker to our world and bound their life forces together. Grey is, and always was, a sadist, and takes extreme pleasure in the cat and mouse games he and Shrieker play with their victims. He uses the Steal Life spell not to gain the benefits of restored youth, but to cause his victims to suffer and die.

STR 35 CON 30 SIZ 60 INT 60 POW 75/165*
DEX 60 APP 10 EDU 92 SAN 0 HP 9
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 2
*Grey has higher statistics than normal from draining the POW of victims using Steal Life.

ATTACKS

Grey will avoid physical confrontation if possible, but if forced to fight he can make all regular attacks at base level for a human.

Skills: Cthulhu Mythos 70%, Intimidate 75%, Language (English) 99%, Language (Latin) 99%, Listen 65%, Medicine 99%, Pretend to be a Corpse, 90%, Psychology 80%.

Weaknesses: At the Keeper's option, he is burned by holy water as though set aflame (indeed, he bursts into flame if doused).

Nationality: British
Age: 207
Education: Doctor of Medicine

Spells: Alter Weather, Enthrall Victim, Extend Life, Steal Life (Deeper Version), Summon/Bind Servitor of the Outer Gods

Keeper's Note: *: Grey and Shrieker are linked in such a way that should Grey be killed, Shrieker will lose its hold upon this earthly plane and disappear 1D4 rounds later.*

SHRIEKER (Servitor of the Outer Gods):

Shrieker resembles a cross between a huge white spider and a centipede with multiple abdomens. It is covered in scores of long chitinous legs, which in turn are spotted with spines and glassy circular eyes. Despite the noise it makes, it has no visible mouth or anything resembling a head.

STR 70 CON 105 SIZ 50 INT 75 POW 110
DEX 95 HP 15
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 7

ATTACKS

Fighting (Claw-tipped tentacles) 45% (22/8), 1D6 damage per talon. A mass of writhing, talon-tipped legs batter and twist at the target. Following a successful hit, roll 1D3 to determine how many talons cause damage.

Alternatively, its legs may be used to seize an opponent with a successful fighting maneuver. The range of its legs is 10 yards.

Skills: none above base.

SPECIAL POWERS

Music of Madness: The discordant music that Shrieker makes, which to human ears resembles a high-pitched shriek varying in tone, adversely affects listeners. Those who hear the wail must make a **Sanity** roll every two rounds that they endure the sound or lose 1D4 Sanity points.

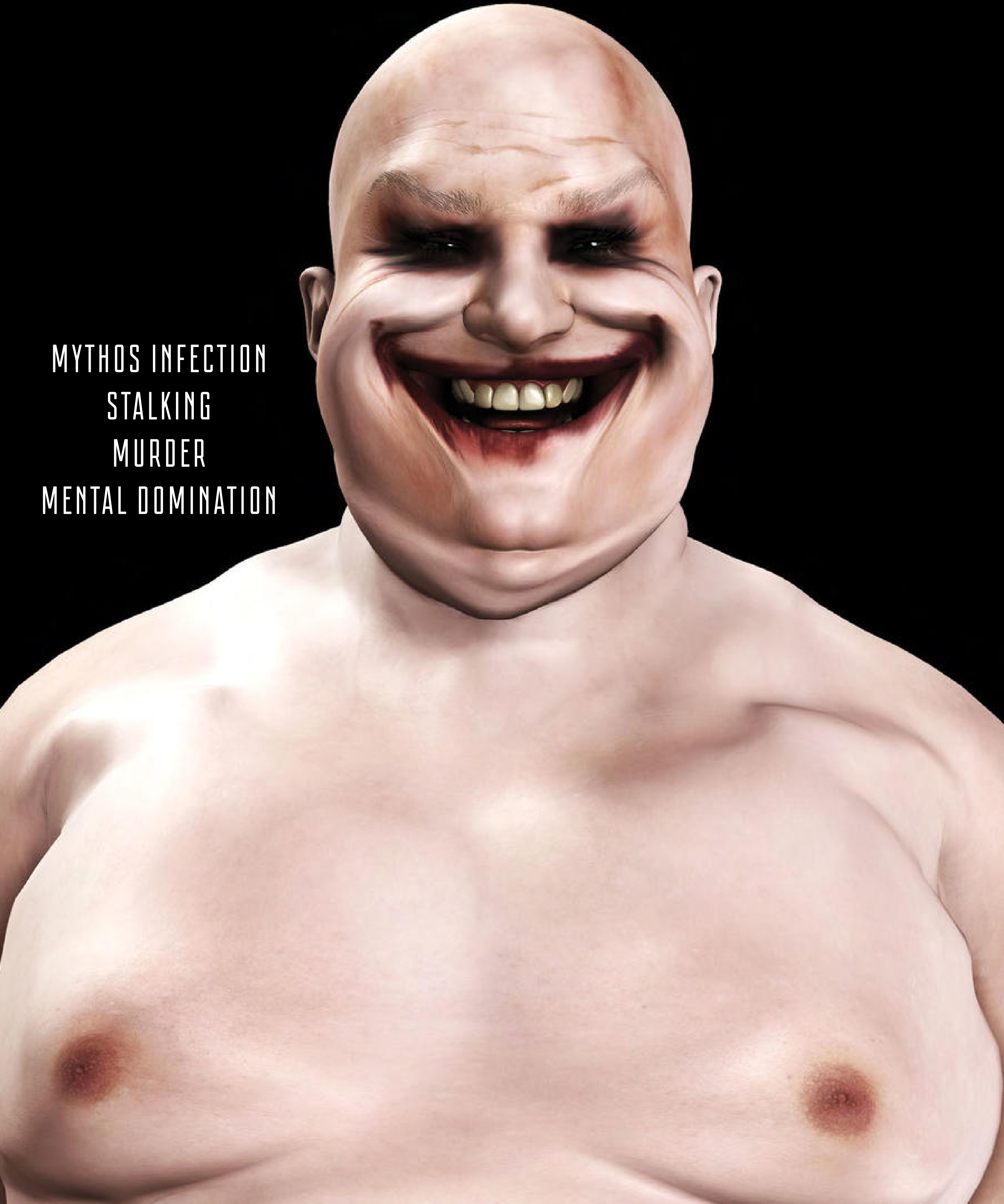
Sense Life: Shrieker has the innate ability to sense life within a 2-mile radius. This does not cost any Magic Points to use. It can distinguish species (such as a dog or a person) but cannot recognize a specific individual.

Defenses: Physical weapons cannot harm it; spells and magical weapons do normal damage; regenerates 3 hit points per round until dead.

Spells: Alter Weather, Implant Fear, Shriveling.

Sanity Loss: 1/1D10 Sanity points to see Shrieker.

Keeper's Note: *: Shrieker and Grey are linked in such a way that should Grey be killed, Shrieker will lose its hold upon this earthly plane and disappear 1D4 rounds later.*


MYTHOS INFECTION
STALKING
MURDER
MENTAL DOMINATION

Introduction

Brent Hodiak loves Wyse Fries, a fast food chain with over thirty outlets in Hodiak's home state. He eats there every chance he gets, which means at least once a day, seven days a week, and usually more often than that. He's also a narcissistic pervert and stalker, and as part of his obsession, he has planted secret cameras in Wyse Fries toilets more than once. One of his cameras was found and reported to police; the others, when found, were confiscated quietly by Wyse Fries' management and tossed out without making a police report, rather than take the publicity hit.

He's also an enthusiastic food blogger, always about Wyse Fries, and runs a fan site called "WyseAss Secret Menu," listing all the special-order items Wyse Fries supposedly sells—whether it actually sells them or not.

Brent has also stalked three Wyse Fries employees to date. His current obsession is Kayla Cooper, manager of a Wyse Fries outlet. Kayla knows about this, and has made her concerns clear to upper management, but upper management has (barbarically) encouraged her not to file a police report. Again, Wyse Fries doesn't want the negative publicity.

On top of all this, Brent's mind has been warped by the Mythos, as the result of collecting some of the stranger and sicker porn and torture videos available through particularly dark back channels. Brent has been corrupting the staff at the Wyse Fries outlet where Kayla used to work, and when Kayla moved to a different outlet to get away from him, Brent followed her there. Thanks to Brent's assiduous corruption, several staff are now hopelessly insane, all so Brent can have allies in his stalking.

Thanks to Brent's corruption, the staff at Kayla's former workplace are homicidal, and those at her current workplace are rapidly getting that way.

FROM THE MANAGEMENT

Obviously, we hope, we here at Stygian Fox do not want to offend any of our readers. If the gender identities of Brent and Kayla would be a source of undue discomfort for any of your players, feel free to swap one or more of them. There's no reason that *The Plawson Tapes* cannot corrupt a woman, and no reason that Kayla could not be Karl, either.

Involving the Investigators

Two bodies have turned up at Kayla's old franchise location. The trigger was Brent's favorite secret menu order, the Land, Sea, and Air—a special combo burger with fish, meat and chicken patties, slathered in Wyse Fries' signature sauce. When ordered, the staff was triggered to put rat poison in the burger. They then followed the victim into the toilets once he became ill, finished him off quietly, then disposed of his body in the garbage bins. Fortunately, the victims were quickly missed, the bodies found, and the entire staff arrested. Two people died on the same day, before the police got involved, and the scandal rocks Wyse Fries. The investigators could be members of the police, representatives of the Department of Agriculture investigating possible food contamination, or even corporate Wyse Fries representatives sent to try and contain and spin the scandal.

Possible avenues of investigation at this stage include:

- Searching the Internet for more information about Wyse Fries.
- Visiting the now closed franchise location.
- Talking to staff.
- Talking to customers.
- Talking to the police, assuming that the investigators have or can get friendly police contacts.

The Internet

Searching the Internet (no check needed) finds a slew of reports about the Wyse Fries killings, all of which dwell on the unprovoked and savage attacks. Several blame undocumented immigrants, pointing out that one of the killers was Mexican. Several others blame video games, saying that the pattern of the attacks is just like a modern AAA game title.

A successful **Library Use** check finds Brent's "WyseAss" food blog, which he posts under the pseudonym Big Ass Fan. The Land, Sea, and Air combo burger is obviously his favorite. A **Computer Use** check can track the blogger's true identity and find Brent's home address. A **Psychology** check while reviewing the blog notes that the blogger goes well beyond obsession and borders on mania, with signs indicative of episodes of hypomania and major depression. **Cthulhu Mythos** notes tag lines in the blog suggestive of Mythos worship.

Further Internet information, while searching for dirt or creepy goings-on at Wyse Fries, can be had on a Hard **Library Use** check. This discovers video feed from some of Brent's toilet cameras, posted and reposted online on voyeur porn sites. The credit card used to create the account that originally posted the videos can also (on a Hard **Computer Use** check) be traced to Brent's home address; alternatively, a **Psychology** check suggests a common writing style and similar tone to the poster's comment style as to the "WyseAss" blog. Kayla features in these videos several times, often enough that anyone seeing them will recognize her immediately if they meet her in person.

The Scene

The now closed restaurant and murder scene has been thoroughly searched by police and sealed off, pending further investigation. Wyse Fries is not in a hurry to reclaim it; upper management is reeling from the scandal and stock price hit. However, anyone who has seen the toilet videos can easily recognize that this is where they were filmed. Also, a successful **Spot Hidden** check notices graffiti all over the bathroom stalls, unusual given that Wyse Fries management would have normally insisted that anything like that be cleaned off immediately. The graffiti is drawn in blood, human brain, and feces; analyzing this sufficiently to come to this realization costs 0/1 **SAN**.

Interviews, Staff Members

All of the current staff members are either under arrest or being questioned; none of them have been released and their lawyers refuse to let the investigators anywhere near their clients. However, **Persuade** or **Charm** checks (likely in the form of a promise to help by finding people who will testify that they are not, in fact, completely psychotic) allow the investigators to track down a former employee who left a few weeks before the incident.

Jorge Garcia, an undocumented worker, quit soon after his former manager, Kayla, moved, and says it was because he was frightened of what was going on at that Wyse Fries location: "Those people were crazy. I did some messed up stuff, but nothing like what they got up to, you know? Drug dealing and putting cleaning fluid in the shake machine wasn't even the worst of it. That fat guy, the one they called Big Ass, he was the one who started it. He had a thing for Kayla, used to come around all the time until she went to another Wyse Fries place. He offered money, drugs, whatever, if it would help us get him closer to her, you know? But it all got weird real fast. I took off before it went to hell, and I'm glad I got out in time." Jorge also knows "Big Ass'" real name, Brent Hodiak, because he overheard Kayla complaining to upper management about him in an effort to get them to back her up in her efforts to get him banned from the restaurant.

Interviews, Customers

Tracking down customers isn't difficult. Many of them are only too happy to talk, particularly if they think they'll be on camera or featured in the news. However, they haven't much to tell; all of them saw the staff get crazier and more violent in the last few weeks before the killings, but none of them expected anything like this. With successful **Fast Talk** or **Charm** checks, the investigators discover, if they didn't already know, that a hidden camera was found in the toilets several weeks before the murders; the customer being interviewed spotted it and complained. However, a **Library Use** check, or a **Computer Use** check if a police database is hacked, reveals that there's no record of any police investigation, nor is there anything about it in the mainstream media.

Interviews, Police

The police won't readily talk to civilians about the case, but if the investigators already have police contacts or can plausibly bluff (Hard **Fast Talk**), the detectives in charge, Roberta Sanchez and Melvin Weeks, admit that they're not sure what to think about this case. The killings are straightforward and between eyewitnesses, security cameras, and forensic evidence, it's not difficult to determine who did what. What worries the detectives is they can't discover why all the staff were so eager to help each other murder two different and apparently unrelated people, and dispose of the bodies in such an amateurish way. It makes them think the defendants will try an insanity plea. "One of them filmed the first killing on his phone, can you beat that?" say the detectives. "He was yelling the whole time, @#$% you Big Ass, @#$% you Big Ass. Like a mantra. Whack-job."

If the investigators research Brent's criminal record, they discover a number of stalking complaints, some civil protective orders related to stalking, as well as a string of minor convictions, most of which are drug related. They can also get his home address, if they don't already have it, as it corresponds to a slew of traffic violations, including a recent one.

Interview, "Big Ass" Brent Hodiak

Should the investigators track down Brent Hodiak's address, they may try to visit him or break into his basement apartment.

Brent lives in a low-rent residential neighborhood on the outskirts of a big commercial district, the sort of distressed area that predatory property developers snap up in the hope of a quick turnaround. He has a basement apartment in a four-unit building. Two of the apartments are being renovated, and the occupants of the third can't stand the construction noise. Neither the contractors nor the other tenant have anything good to say about Brent, who they think is a "complete and utter asshole." This is mostly because of his personal habits, lack of respect for personal space, and body odor.

A **Computer Use** or **Spot Hidden** check notices that not only does Brent have a very impressive multi-screen workstation, about the only thing in the apartment that's clean, it's rigged to display several different video feeds at once. Most of them are offline, but those that aren't show toilets, probably at fast food chains, and those familiar with Wyse Fries recognize the company's colors and decoration scheme. Trawling through his desktop finds conclusive evidence (no check needed) that Brent is the "Big Ass Fan" who runs the WyseAss food blog and secret menu site.

He also owns a wide range of spy and surveillance gear, and judging by his worktable, he's more than capable of modifying his own equipment.

A **Spot Hidden** check finds a book diversion safe designed to look like a hardback novel, and inside the safe is an external computer hard drive. A Hard **Computer Use** check is needed to use the hard drive without triggering malware that wipes both the hard drive and the computer that it's plugged into. If this is done, the investigators can trawl through Brent's extensive porn and torture video collection, including his copy of the rather legendary *Plawson Tapes*.

The Plawson Tapes

During the mid-1980s, a series of horrible sex crimes rocked the small town of Plawson, Michigan. Over a dozen people were raped, tortured, and murdered. The victims ranged in race, sex, and age, and there seemed to be no common thread connecting them. After two years of nightmares, the terror just stopped, and the killer was never arrested. What turned this tale of murder and madness into an urban legend was a news report that discarded wrappers to blank Betamax video cassettes were found at three of the crime scenes. It was believed that the sexual sadist responsible for the atrocities recorded them. Since then, there has been whispers that those with deviant tastes might acquire these snuff films if they knew what dark shadow to look in. That legend is true and these tapes are what sent Brent Hodiak over the edge.

The *Plawson Tapes* have since been transferred to DVD. The identity of whomever first made the copies is unknown, but it is believed to have been the original murderer. It is unknown how many copies exist, but DVDs have been recovered from a Vermont triple homicide crime scene in 1998, and in the collections of three different serial killers over the years. The location of only one of these DVDs remains known, that being in a Boise, Idaho police evidence room. The rest of the DVDs have disappeared. Perhaps quite coincidently, several police officers have either disappeared or committed suicide shortly after the DVDs vanished from the evidence rooms. In one famous instance, a Cleveland homicide detective murdered his entire family before putting a bullet through his head. What was not reported from this incident was that a melted DVD was found in his fireplace. As for the original Betamax tapes, their location, like the identity of the one that made them, remains a mystery.

The man behind the tapes is named Paul Culkly. In the 1980s, Paul was a very jaded devotee of pornography. In a quest to push his limits and feed his deviant desires, he found a group of secretive hedonists and managed to not only join them, but was read into their mysteries. Whatever they were doing, Paul Culkly was fundamentally twisted. He was on some level still himself, but rewired and overridden by something ancient and amoral, something interested in seeing how far humans could be pushed before they broke. The end result was a video diary of depravity. These videos provide a first-person view of rape, torture, murder, mutilation, and cannibalism. The video quality is jittery, blurry, and often static-filled due to the poor quality of the cheap commercially available camcorder used.

THE PLAWSON TAPES

A video format Mythos tome, in English, recorded by an unnamed videographer (Paul Culkly) between 1984-1986, 378 minutes. An unknown number of copies of these videos exist, but they are very rare. The vast majority are on DVD, although Paul still owns the nine original Betamax tapes.

Watching the video without the sound causes a 1D4 SAN loss per hour to all but the most hardened, or sociopathic, individuals. Watching the video with the sound on causes a 1D6 SAN loss per hour for the combination of atrocities and Mythos knowledge gleaned from Paul while torturing his victims. This also grants +1% to **Cthulhu Mythos** per hour. Worst of all, just watching the Plawson Tapes risks transforming and corrupting the viewer as it did to Paul and Brent, but only if done with the sound on, and this is particularly likelyif the viewer is of a morally debased nature.

The complete *Plawson Tapes* run over six hours. The face of the cameraman is never shown, but his hands are. Sometimes they are the bloodstained hands of a Caucasian male (Paul), using instruments of torture. At other times, they are the hands of others. They caress the cringing victims, almost lovingly.

The sounds that accompany these nightmarish images largely consist of the screams and pleas of the victims, but occasionally, Paul lets loose with some Mythos-inspired ranting and secret whispering.

As for what happened to Paul Culkly, he is still alive all these years later. He is now in his mid-seventies, and while his whereabouts are unknown, he often haunts the darkest corners of the Internet's dark web, in the chat rooms where pedophiles, snuff film fans, torture lovers, and anyone wanting the hardest of hardcore porn lurk. If he finds a truly depraved soul, he just might offer to send them a copy of the *Plawson Tapes*, now in digital form, for both their, and his, amusement.

And with Brent Hodiak, that is exactly what Paul did.

Watching the video with the sound on spreads the meme, and transforms the viewer as Paul has been transformed unless the viewer makes an opposed **POW** check against a **POW** of 140. Anyone possessed becomes a psychotic, amoral and arguably possessed fiend, superficially still the same but with his will overborne and interested in spreading the meme himself, just like Brent.

Where's Brent?

Brent won't be home when the investigators call, nor will he return; he will have been alerted by the things that whisper in his brain that intruders have found his flat. From that point forward, he'll live in his car until the conclusion of the scenario.

Brent switched his attentions from one Wyse Fries outlet to another when Kayla moved locations, and he's been busy.

When the investigators go to Kayla's new job, he's already there ahead of them, and has taken control of the place.

Brent's transformed condition enables him to know exactly what that person most wants. Brent then offers to supply that thing, and while he's supplying that demand, his proximity starts to psychically undermine the target, if they are mentally weak or predisposed to corruption., just like the video download described above. Except since now the infection is attenuated by proxy, through Brent, it does not transform the targets. It just drives them insane instead.

The problem is that these secondarily infected followers tend to be violent and self-destructive. This soon leads to the dissolution of each group of targets in a messy bloodbath.

The wants of the staff at the Wyse Fries are largely simple, mostly to do with money, drugs, and petty revenge. Weeks of subversion and psychic attacks have taken their toll on the Wyse Fries staff. By the time that the investigators get there, they will be full-blown psychotics, and while everything seems normal on the outside, the ultra-violence is well under way.

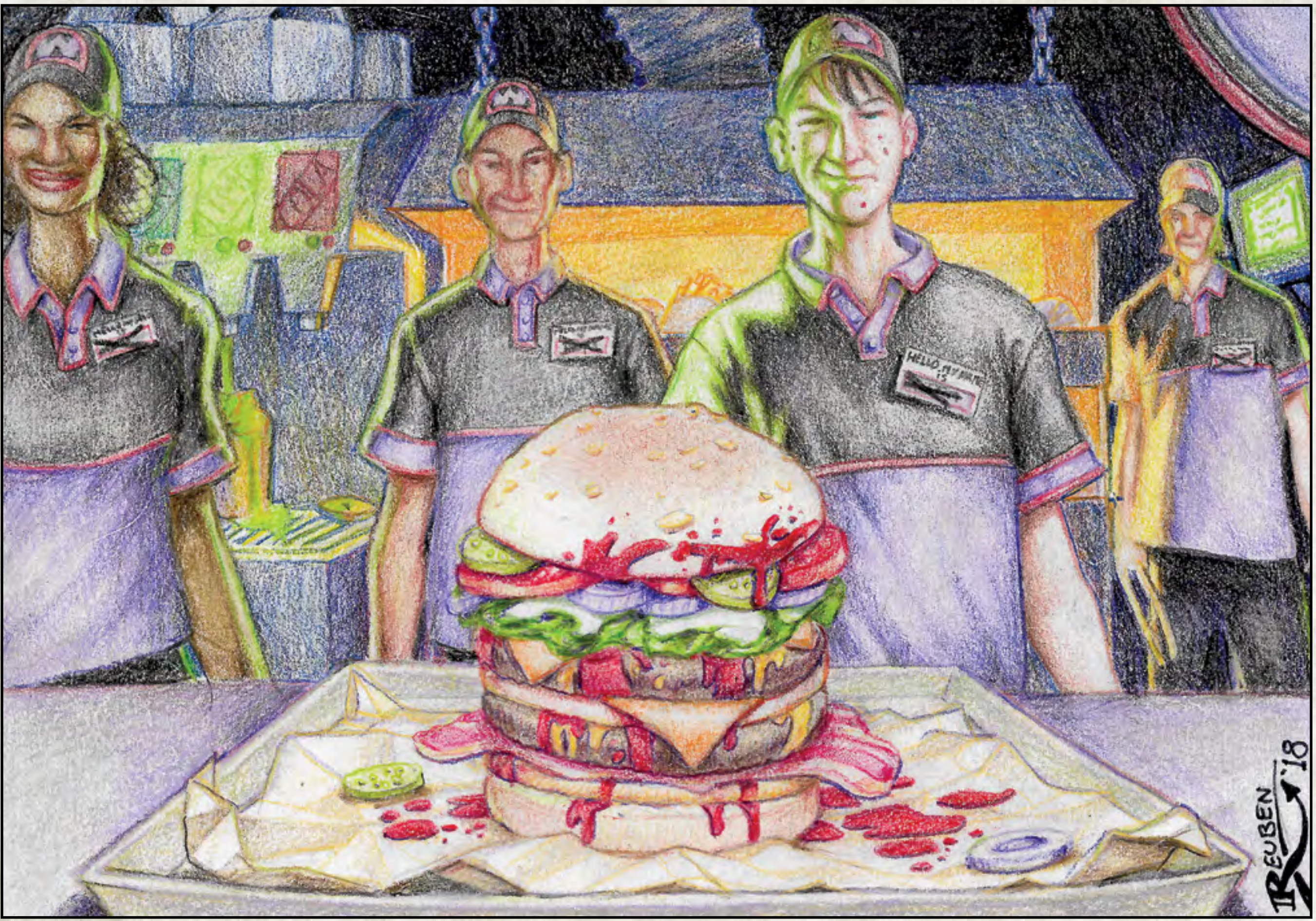
Two customers are dead, poisoned and lying in their own vomit at one of the tables (0/1D3 **SAN** loss). Five others, including a family of three, are cowering in their seats because one of the staff has a shotgun, though when the investigators enter, this is hidden behind the counter, out of sight. A **Spot Hidden** check notices that shotgun, but only if the person making the check is standing at the service counter. Out in the parking lot, a drive-through customer is sitting in his vehicle, half his head blown away by that same shotgun (1/1D4+1 **SAN** loss).

Meanwhile, Kayla's hiding in the toilets and Brent is outside the door, pleading with her. Kayla's the only one of the staff sufficiently incorruptible to resist secondary infection, and she detests Brent.

All cell phone communication is out thanks to a high power cellular blocker that Brent has stashed behind the food counter. It's military grade with Brent's personal modifications; anyone trying to turn it off needs to make a Hard **Electrical Repair** check, or an improvised explosive device will detonate for 2D10 damage, decreasing by one point per foot away.

The police haven't been called yet, but will arrive in force in about forty minutes, thanks to a passerby calling it in at one of the few remaining pay phones in the area, unless the investigators do something to hurry the police along.

If Brent is threatened, his transformed state is far tougher than it looks, and he will probably kill the investigators unless they're well prepared. However, Brent has a weakness—standing up to him fearlessly or taunting him or otherwise openly resisting his corrupting influence. If the investigators taunt Brent directly, or shout him down, the investigator must make a Hard **Psychology** check, with a bonus die if they've visited his basement flat, talked to the police, or otherwise found information that Brent considers very embarrassing. His porn habit, police record, and toilet camera feeds all count



as embarrassing. If taunted, Brent is vulnerable and has only 13 HP (as opposed to his normal 75). Thus, Kayla (who has successfully stood up to him) is well-positioned to do away with Brent, as are any particularly brave or straightforward investigators who make an affirmative stand.

Rewards and Repercussions

Preventing Brent from taking Kayla, and saving the surviving customers from the insane Wyse Fries employees, counts as a complete win. If the investigators deal with Brent and the employees but Kayla or the surviving customers are killed, this is a partial win. If Brent escapes, this is a loss.

Assume for game purposes that all civilians have 10 HP and Dodge at 20%, with no other relevant skills or defenses. Kayla has 12 HP and Dodge at 25%, with no other relevant skills or defenses.

A complete win is worth 1D8 **SAN** bonus, a partial win is worth 1D4 **SAN**, and a loss incurs a 1D6 **SAN** penalty.

INSANE WYSE FRIES EMPLOYEES

STR 65	CON 60	SIZ 65	INT (25)	POW (15)
DEX 70	APP 50	EDU 65	SAN 0	HP 12

Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 60% (30/12). Improvised or handy weapons include: Knife (damage 1D4+2+db), Cleaver (damage 1D8+db), pan filled with bubbling fat (damage 1D10, anyone hit suffers a further 1D6 in the second round, single use item), mace spray (damage stun, 6ft range, 18 doses). Otherwise fist (damage 1D3+db). Fist may include weapons that have no intrinsic damage stat but are cinematic to use, e.g., punching someone while holding a plastic ketchup bottle.

Firearms (Shotgun) 55% (27/11), 2/round, damage 4D6/2D6/1D6, 10/20/50 yards, malfunction 00, capacity 5. Only one employee has this weapon.

Firearms (Handgun) 45% (22/8), .38 automatic: 1 or 3/round, damage 1D10, 15 yards, malfunction 99, capacity 8. Only one worker is so armed.

Dodge 45% (22/9)

Skills: Language (Spanish or English) 65%, Language (English, for non-native speakers) 40%, Credit Rating 10%, Listen 30%, Spot Hidden 30%, Stealth 30%.
Defenses: none above base.
Nationality: A mix of American and Mexican
Age: 19 to 45
Education: High School and up
Spells: none.
Indefinite Insanity: Psychopathic murderers
Notes: Stats in () represent modified statistics, caused by repeated psychic attack. These people are out of their minds and cannot be reasoned with, but still react like ordinary fast food workers. Ordering them to surrender won't work; ordering a double cheeseburger and fries will, though it's not a good idea to eat anything they serve since it contains deadly (2D10) poison. However, ordering a Land, Sea, and Air causes them to launch an all-out assault on whoever places the order. The exact number of employees is up to the Keeper, but there ought to be at least one per investigator.

Names may include: Hector, Adriana, Mia, Harper, Mason, Ethan, Rafael, Sophia. Aisha, Lakiesha, Lamar, Elon.

BRENT HODIAK

STR 125	CON 625	SIZ 125	INT 150	POW 140
DEX 70				HP 75

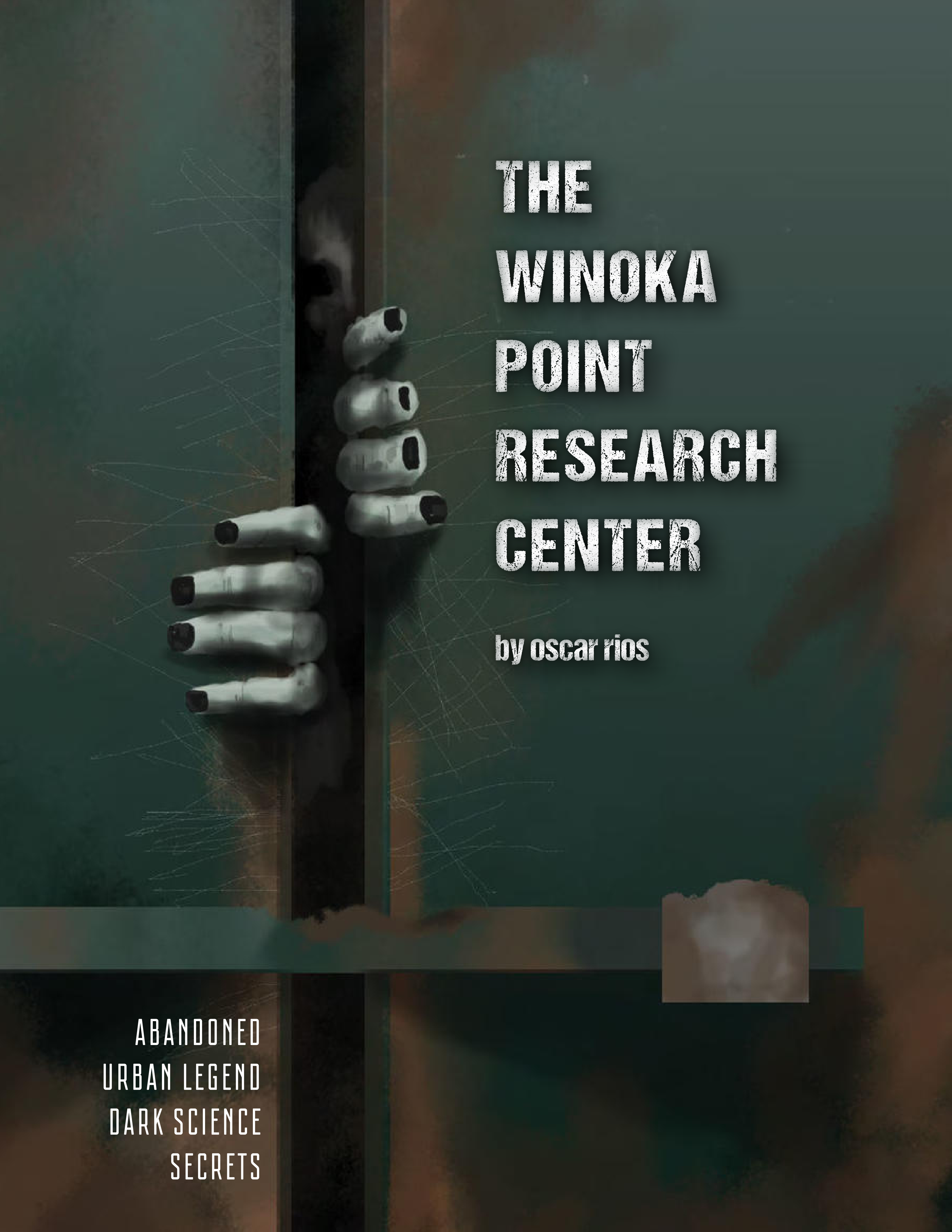
Damage bonus: +1D6
Build: 1
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 100% (50/20), damage 1D3+db

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: none.
Defenses: none.
SAN Loss: 1/1D6 to see him display superhuman strength or fail to go down after a direct hit that would kill a normal person.
Notes: If Brent is successfully stood up to or taunted, he should be treated as only having 13 HP for that duration.



THE WINOKA POINT RESEARCH CENTER

by oscar rios

ABANDONED
URBAN LEGEND
DARK SCIENCE
SECRETS

Introduction

The Winoka Point Research Center is an abandoned government research laboratory. Most think the stories regarding it are urban legends and the government has worked hard to promote that belief. However, it is a real place and the tragic events which took place there thirty-two years ago are more fantastic and terrifying than all the urban legends and rumors surrounding it.

The Winoka Point Research Center is on Winoka Point, a tiny island little more than three square miles in area. Keepers can place the island anywhere off the northeastern or northwestern coast of the United States, about five miles off shore. The nearest community to the island is the village of South Newberry, a crabbing and fishing village of only 423 residents.

The Urban Legend/ Involving the Investigators

There are many stories about the Winoka Point Research Center. Some are partially true but most are completely fabricated. The investigators may be urban explorers; kids acting on a dare; or philosophically-oriented protesters looking to "expose the truth about secret government experiments."

The core of the story is that the government was conducting secret military research there. In 1985, the facility suffered some sort of incident which forced it to be hastily evacuated. It was abandoned and has been off limits to everyone since then. All of that is true.

Rumors abound about the focus of the research conducted here. Various stories claim that they were: creating biological weapons; testing a phase displacement generator (able to turn ships, tanks, and planes ghost-like, making them both invulnerable to attack and undetectable); developing time travel; working on teleportation technologies; or conducting interrogations and autopsies on extra-terrestrials. The truth is far worse.

Stories also say that the waters around Winoka Point are mined and patrolled by the Coast Guard. The research buildings are rumored to be in a poor state of repair, making them dangerous to explore. People say trespassers can be shot on sight, arrested for treason, or quarantined for the rest of their lives because of biological contamination. Lastly, there are tales about a group of urban explorers vanishing there back in the early 2000s, but no one agrees on their names, number, or when that incident actually occurred. Most of this is also true.

Researching Winoka Point

The government has worked to erase Winoka Point from the historical record, media, and Internet. The island was officially renamed Connelly Island and this is what it appears as on the Internet and all printed sources since 1987. Investigators doing research on sources earlier than 1985 must make a Hard success on **Library Use** rolls, as the information has been methodically removed from archives. Officially, the government denies that such a place ever existed, period.

Those pushing too hard or trying to go public with their findings may end up visited by government agents in dark suits and glasses, delivering vague threats and warnings to forget they ever heard of Winoka Point. Also, anyone making a Critical failure, or failing a Push roll when doing online research for details on Winoka Point, receive such a visit, as their efforts are detected by the authorities who monitor the Internet for such searches.

Investigators making an Extreme skill success while researching Winoka Point find a story about Henrietta Krantz, an investigative reporter working from Topeka, Kansas, who published a story about Winoka Point in 1992. She claimed that Noble Prize winning biochemist Gregory Doddson not only worked at Winoka Point, but died there in an incident in 1985, and not in a plane crash as was originally reported. Proof of her claim was never presented, as shortly after her story broke, she committed suicide using carbon monoxide from a running car in a closed garage. Her husband Jordan was interviewed by The Topeka Capital (local newspaper) and KTKA (local ABC News affiliate), claiming Henrietta did not commit suicide but was killed as part of a government cover-up. Jordan Krantz, in turn, died three days later in a house fire, labeled as "accidental." It should be clear that the authorities are willing to kill to protect Winoka Point's secrets.

Visiting South Newberry

The villagers here don't like to talk about Winoka Point, which they refer to as Connelly Island. Anyone younger than fifty knows very little about Winoka Point. Getting locals to talk about the island requires a Hard success on social interaction skills (**Persuade**, **Fast Talk**, **Intimidate**, etc.). If such efforts are successful, they'll say:

- The Coast Guard monitors the sea traffic around the island, and takes steps to keep people away from it.
- No one ever goes there.
- The waters around the island are protected by chains hung between buoys, as well as sea mines.

Those making an Extreme success on such skill checks also learn the following:

- People suspect the phones and Internet in South Newberry are monitored by the government for any mention of Winoka Point/Connelly Island.
- Drones are sometime seen flying over Connelly Island.
- A group of two men and a woman rented a boat from a local (George Elderest, now deceased) and went to the island many years ago. They never returned, and wreckage from the rented boat washed up along the shore across from Winoka Point for the next two months.

Getting to Winoka Point

Investigators cannot rent or borrow a boat from anyone in South Newberry. Renting or borrowing a boat from nearby Bayville (5 miles south of South Newberry) is possible. Investigators buying a boat, or who already own one can attempt to sail there, if they have located a map to Winoka Point in their research (or realize the island was renamed).

Investigators sailing to the island during daylight hours may be detected. The pilot of the vessel must make a **Luck** check to avoid detection. Failure means that they are discovered by the Coast Guard, via drone or cutter patrol. Such investigators are chased away from the island or arrested. Investigators making a Critical failure of their **Luck** roll hit one of the few remaining functional proximity mines placed around the island. A hole is blown in the vessel, everyone on board takes 1D10 points of damage, and the vessel sinks in 5–15 minutes. Depending on how far from the island they are, the investigators can reach Winoka Point before they sink. Otherwise, the investigators must swim, either back to the mainland or Winoka Point.

Investigators avoiding detection must still navigate the obstacle chains surrounding the island. The investigators piloting the vessel must make a **Pilot (Boat)** check, or have their propeller and prop damaged, setting their vessel adrift. Investigators making a successfully Piloting check avoid these obstacles and make landfall on Winoka Point without incident.

Welcome to Winoka Point

This lonely, barren, windswept island is home only to seagulls, and possibly some seals or sea lions. A single, dilapidated structure stands in the center of the island, surrounded by a sagging, rusted, ten-foot chain link fence, topped with barbed wire. The fence has been cut in one place, and the wind has blown it down in another, so investigators walking the perimeter can easily gain entry.

The three-story facility is in a very sad state. The roof collapsed nine years ago, burying the entire third floor, half of the second floor, and about 20% of the ground floor. Everything is water damaged; plants grow in the rubble and on the floor where soil has blown in. All of the glass is broken, the wood warped, and paper reduced to brittle faded scraps or damp pulp. There is an elevator shaft, with signs that it's been pried open, and it is held slightly open with an office chair.

Moving about the ruins requires a **DEX** check to avoid 1D3 points of injury due to slipping and falling. Investigators failing a **DEX** check while exploring the 2nd floor must make a **Luck** check. If this fails, they fall through the floor and crash on the main floor, suffering 1D8 points of damage.

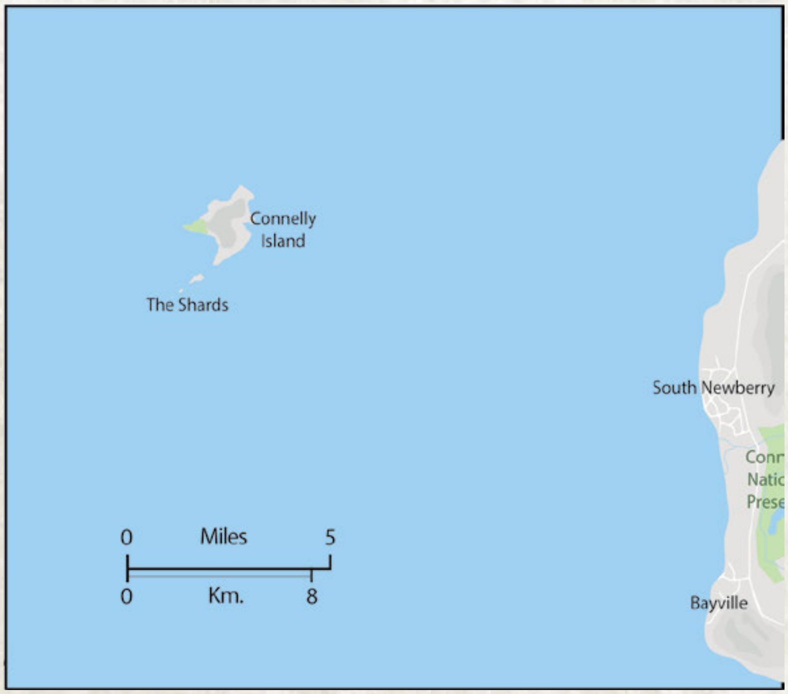
Investigators making a successful **Spot Hidden** roll can find the following items on the main floor:

- Intact lab equipment, showing the research here was biological in nature.
- A large, ash filled drum beside a paper shredder; with an empty flare gun beside it (from when the staff burned most records).
- A backpack filled with ropes, flashlight, extra batteries, a first aid kit, a crowbar, an old flip phone (from circa early 2000s). This shows that the rumored urban explorers from the early 2000s did, in fact, make it this far. It also shows that they did not leave.

Investigators searching the 2nd floor can find the remains of an old Cray X-MP supercomputer, state of the art for 1983. It is, of course, useless.

The Elevator Shaft

On the main floor, there is an elevator which only goes down. The doors are currently open about half way, held so by a piece of old office chair. The shaft is very dark and goes down about sixty feet, ending at the roof of the elevator. There is a



small door in the elevator's roof, through which one can enter the elevator.

Inside of the elevator are: bits of human remains; rotted tattered clothing; bits of bone; and a hardhat with a flashlight attachment and a short-range walkie talkie (batteries to both are long dead). Inside of the body's pockets is a wallet, with an old Minnesota driver's license for a Winona Hilton, which expired in 2006.

The elevator door, opening to sublevel 1, is closed but can be forced open with a STR of 120, or half that if using a pry bar or other leveraging tool.

Sub-Level 1

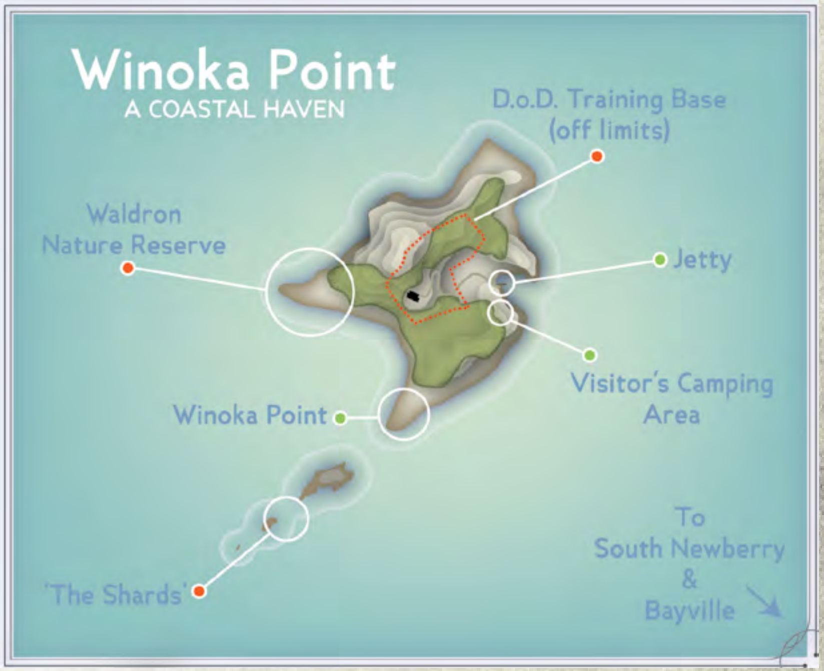
This area contains the first of two underground laboratory levels. There is no power here, making the area as dark as a tomb. There are workstations, broken computers, dissection tables, and chalkboards with faded notes and formulas. Moving about is difficult due to the clutter and darkness, requiring an outside light sources.

Investigators making a careful search find the scattered remains of dozens of people (mostly clothing and bone fragments), spent brass shell casings, ID cards (mostly doctors and security people), and cages containing the skeletal remains of rats, hamsters, dogs, and a few chimpanzees. Investigators making successful **Spot Hidden** checks find the following:

- The ID card of Dr. Gregory Doddson, Nobel Prize winning biochemist, on a blood-stained lab coat
- A desk safe. The safe can be pried open with a STR of 120 (or 60 with a prybar). Inside are binders of notes and papers about "Project Osiris," which is mostly filled with technical and highly advanced biochemistry and virology notes. Skimming it takes 1 hour and allows the investigators to learn a brief overview of Project Osiris.
- A cage with what appears to be a living lab rat (see **The Rat**, below).
- The first of two security doors, leading downstairs to Sub-Level 2 (see **The Security Door**, below).

Overview of Project Osiris

Project Osiris was a government research project, aiming to recreate the research of a Dr. Herbert West, a physician and biochemist who vanished shortly after the First World War. He was rumored to have created a serum that reanimated dead tissue. These stories were proven true when his notes were found (around 1948) and experiments successfully recreated his work (at Winoka Point Research Center) in 1981.



Work was going on to better understand the process, with the goal of having it lay dormant in a human body until the subject's death, quickly returning them to life thereafter. This was a military project, aimed at creating unstoppable soldiers who rose from the dead and continued fighting. The project was stalled in terms of trying to find a way to have the process kept safely dormant in a host body. Experiments were being conducted using a modified virus (designated O-12-W) as a storage and delivery agent.

The Rat

This animal is filthy but seemingly harmless…at first. It can be heard moving in the dark before it is seen. It is in a fallen cage behind an overturned chair. Investigators picking up the cage for a better look run the risk of being bitten. The door to the cage is flimsy and the rat can easily escape. Once disturbed, the ravenous and undead creature escapes its cage and attacks. Unfortunately for investigators, its bite is very dangerous.

The O-12-W Virus

The rat's saliva teems with active O-12-W virus, which is lethal. It inflicts 4D10 points of damage to victims in 10–120 (1D12 x 10) minutes after exposure. Investigators are allowed an Extreme Con check which, if successful, halves the damage suffered. (Alternatively, immediately chopping off an infected extremity might avoid infection.) The physical effects are pain, cramps, dizziness, and broken capillaries in the eyes and blood oozing from the gums, nose, ears, and nether-regions.

Those killed by exposure to O-12-W don't remain dead for long (see **Back from the Dead**, below). Those who survive infection permanently lose 3D10 CON points and become carriers of the O-12-W virus (transmitted through their saliva).

The Security Door

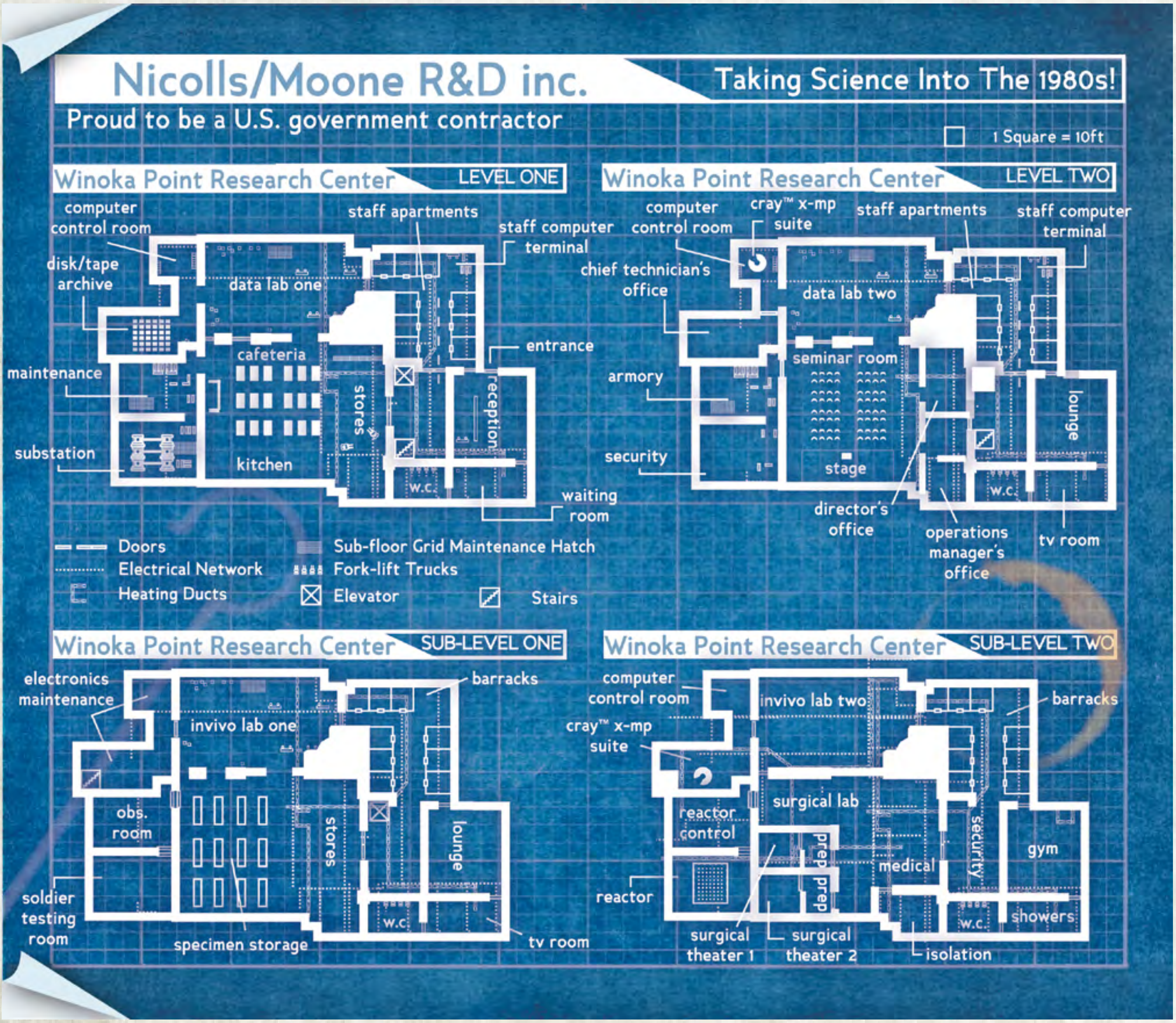
This large, reinforced door was once triggered by a security card lock but, without power, no longer works. There is a window in the door showing a staircase leading down twenty feet before turning out of sight and continuing downward. The door can be forced open with 200 STR, or 150 if investigators use a pry bar or other leveraging tools. Investigators approaching the door can hear banging coming from the stairwell.

Messages from the Darkness

The timing between the raps varies, forming Morse code S.O.S. If the investigators respond they can have a brief conversation with the unseen sender. Following are some of the points that the sender might convey:

- They are trapped and need help (they beg for it if need be).
- Please open the door so that they can get out.
- If the investigators can find Winona's walkie-talkie, then they can speak.
- His name is Scott Kelburton.
- They were exploring the place and became trapped.
- They need medical attention.

If investigators have extra batteries for Winona's walkie-talkie, they can speak to this person who claims to be Scott Kelburton. They stick to the same points as above, offering no explanation as to how they're still alive after being trapped for nearly a decade (assuming that they're one of the missing urban explorers). The sender taps out or says anything to get investigators to open the security door.


Nicolls/Moone R&D inc.
Taking Science Into The 1980s!
Proud to be a U.S. government contractor
1 Square = 10ft
Winoka Point Research Center
LEVEL ONE
computer control room
staff apartments
staff computer terminal
disk/tape archive
data lab one
entrance
maintenance
cafeteria
stores
reception
substation
kitchen
w.c.
waiting room
Winoka Point Research Center
LEVEL TWO
computer control room
cray™ x-mp suite
staff apartments
staff computer terminal
chief technician's office
data lab two
armory
seminar room
lounge
security
stage
w.c.
director's office
operations manager's office
tv room
Doors
Electrical Network
Heating Ducts
Sub-floor Grid Maintenance Hatch
Fork-lift Trucks
Elevator
Stairs
Winoka Point Research Center
SUB-LEVEL ONE
electronics maintenance
barracks
invivo lab one
obs. room
stores
lounge
soldier testing room
w.c.
specimen storage
tv room
Winoka Point Research Center
SUB-LEVEL TWO
computer control room
invivo lab two
barracks
cray™ x-mp suite
surgical lab
reactor control
prep
prep
security
gym
medical
reactor
w.c.
showers
surgical theater 1
surgical theater 2
isolation

Opening the Security Door

If the investigators are foolish enough to open the security door they are immediately attacked. A fast-moving figure charges up the stairs from the darkness and into Sub-Level 1, attacking everyone within reach. It is the reanimated corpse of Scott Kelburton, infected with the O-12-W virus (see **Back from the Dead**).

Sub-Level 2

Investigators foolish enough to explore Sub-Level 2 find more ruined labs, a second, ruined Cray X-MP, and a small nuclear reactor (with all fissionable material removed). Not only is the area dangerously radioactive (increasing 1 level of damage per 30 minutes of exposure on the "Other Forms of Damage" Table in *The Call of Cthulhu Keeper's Rulebook*, p. 124), but there are puddles of sludge (once Project Osiris Zombies from the original incident in 1985), teeming with active O-12-W virus.

Back from the Dead

If investigators free Scott Kelburton, or one of them succumbs to the bite of the Winoka Point Lab Rat, the remaining investigators are in for a tough fight. Slain investigators (who now become NPCs) and/or Scott Kelburton are now Project Osiris Zombies. They are dark purple in color, hairless, with moist flesh with seems to glisten with sticky tar as their mouths constantly drool saliva. While they retain their memories and intellect, they no longer have any form of empathy with living human beings.

A Project Osiris Zombie's overriding drive is to infect others and raise an army of their own kind to overthrow mankind and tear civilization asunder. Their first priority is escaping Winoka Point. Its secondary priority is infecting whoever tries to stop them with the O-12-W virus, through a bite. Failing both of these goals, it attempts to kill anyone getting in its way.

Rewards and Repercussions

Escaping Winoka Point without being infected or losing team members gains +1D6 **SAN**. If the investigators somehow manage to unleash the O-12-W virus on the mainland, it may well spell the end of mankind. The government is willing to go to great lengths, including a Drone Strike or tactical nuclear strike on U.S. soil, to contain it. In the case of Winoka Point Research Station, some secrets are better left alone.

WINOKA POINT LAB RAT

STR 10 CON 190 SIZ 10 INT 10 POW 10
DEX 60 HP 20

Damage bonus: none.
Build: -2
Move: 7

ATTACKS

Fighting (Bite) 50% (25/10), damage 1 point + infection

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Defenses: Takes minimum possible damage from non-magical attacks. Immune to poison.

SAN Loss: 0/1D3 points to see the Winoka Point Lab Rat, once one realizes that it is not normal (such as when it survives being stomped on and keeps coming).

Killing the Rat: The lab animal is so resilient to damage that it seems nearly invulnerable. Only gross destruction (by non-magical means) renders its body so broken that it is no longer able to move. However, even then it remains alive on a cellular level, muscles twitching and red eyes following the investigators. Only by burning or dissolving the body in acid can the rat truly is destroyed. The same is true of Project Osiris Zombies (see below).

PROJECT OSIRIS ZOMBIE

STR 80 CON 80 SIZ 65 INT 55 POW 10
DEX 50 HP 14

Average Damage bonus: +1D4
Average Build: 1
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+db. Critical hits cause transmission of the O-12-W virus.

Skills: none above base.

Defenses: Minimal possible damage from non-magical weapons, immune to poison.

SAN Loss: 1/1D8 Sanity Points to see a Project Osiris Zombie.

PHLEBOTOMY

by
jeffrey
moeller

BLOOD
MEDICAL INDUSTRY
MYTHOS INFECTION
SECRETS

Introduction and Overview

LONDON SINCLAIR REALLY JUST WANTS TO LIVE HER LIFE IN PEACE. OF COURSE, WHEN YOU ARE A FABULOUSLY WEALTHY, BEAUTIFUL, AND FAMOUS ACTRESS/SINGER/PROFESSIONAL CELEBRITY LIKE SHE IS, PEACE IS A RELATIVE TERM. AND WHEN YOU ARE A SEMI-HUMAN, POTENTIALLY IMMORTAL THING, PLAGUED BY NIGHTMARES OF THE LESS HUMAN PARTS OF YOUR ANCESTRY AND CONSTANTLY SELF-MEDICATING TO KILL THE PAIN, IT IS EVEN MORE ELUSIVE.

London is rich, famous, and hounded by paparazzi desperate to get any scrap of information about her. She is a substance abuser par excellence, although she needs to take a lot of drugs to feel anything at all from them. She has been in and out of rehab, seen her career ebb and flow, and lost and gained fortunes on the turn of a card.

She is not at all deliberately malicious, and certainly does not want to destroy the world, but she's a hot mess, struggling to cope with what she is. She has dark secrets, both regarding her inhumanity and what she has had to do over the years to try and keep it secret. By way of example, she does not swap bodily fluids with anyone who does not have at least a touch of Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome; the horrible consequences of that first time, in high school, impressed that lesson upon her.

Unfortunately for her, there are people out there who suspect (but cannot prove) what she really is: a Fosterling of the Old Ones, the final and successful achievement of two hundred years of genetic breeding experiments. Her family's not her problem—she's their crowning achievement, the ultimate expression of the Patriarch's will and the final progression of Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome. They allowed her to be adopted into a Hollywood acting family, so that she could achieve the wealth and success that she has achieved.

London's problem is a company called Wuxie Pharma. Wuxie is cloaked in layers of obfuscation, appearing to be little more than a front company for numerous, shadowy investors. It has funded research into Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome, and will seem to be interested in harvesting London's valuable (weaponizable) genetic mutations. Wuxie is utterly ruthless and plays dirty, but do not understand that they are dealing with the Mythos or even what that is. In reality, they want to figure out how to kill her; its owners are the parents of the high school boyfriend that she accidentally killed during sex.

As the scenario begins, London is up for a major film role, one that promises to be a multi-million dollar payday, and resurrect her career for the umpteenth time. The insurance company backing the film has insisted that she take a thorough blood test for drugs of abuse as a condition of underwriting. London decides to go to an out-of-the-way phlebotomy lab in Cleveland, Ohio, incognito, to get the lab work done. Wuxie's enforcers are on her trail, however, and things do not go as smoothly at the phlebotomy lab as she had hoped.

TRACK MARKS

This scenario draws upon, but does not require you to have previously run, "**Separation Anxiety.**" the first scenario in this collection. You should review it for a summary of Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome and the history of the Farnsworth/Bell family. If not previously run, it is available as a side adventure, should the investigators probe deeply into others with London Sinclair's "medical condition." London's therapist, Dr. Clek, is a central figure in "**The Focus Group.**"

Involving the Investigators

There are numerous avenues for potential investigator involvement. One (or more) of them may be ill and getting a blood test, in need of a drug screen, or otherwise a patient at the QwikLab phlebotomy lab in Cleveland, Ohio. They offer online appointments, secure online test results, and early hours, including on Saturday mornings, a very popular time for people who hold down full-time jobs. They may be responding police officers or Center for Disease Control investigators, determined to get to the bottom of the carnage at the lab. Or they may be paparazzi or schlock journalists following a rumor and hoping to get footage and/or dirt on London Sinclair, a train wreck of a celebrity. (This last category will already have the information in *Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #2*.) Finally, occult investigators who learn some of the more awful details of the carnage may get interested after the fact.

Saturday Morning at the Phlebotomy Lab

QwikLab is a largely online business that draws controlled blood samples and transmits them to a lab for specified testing. It has a small, basic, but functional office located on the ground floor of an office building full of dentists, psychologists, and small law firms in a somewhat grungy section of town. Their website touts security and privacy because reports are transmitted exclusively online or "via courier through special arrangement." They open at 7am on Saturdays; one of the investigators has an appointment for 7:10am.

There are three security cameras: one obvious one trained on the waiting room, one obvious one outside watching the fire exit from that side, and one in the lab room itself, incorporated into the computer work station in that room. Note: a **Law** roll might tip an investigator off to look for that one later; its purpose, given the purpose of the lab, is to maintain chain of custody on drug-test related blood samples. If the investigator(s) actually read the fine print on the medical waivers they are asked to sign online (or on a tablet upon arrival), this camera is disclosed and its operation waived in the case of a drug test. They may also deduce this from Jess Bell's actions upon arrival.

Events unfold as follows, absent unusual investigator action:

~6am: London Sinclair and her bodyguard, Jess Bell, arrive at a private airstrip and have a limousine pick them up and take them to the lab. They have come to Cleveland in an effort to avoid being observed by paparazzi and tabloid journalists, who always take an interest in anything that smacks of a drug test on her part.

~6:30am: The phlebotomy tech, Maureen Bednarski, a 25-year-old community college graduate, arrives early, goes in, and gets ready for a customer that paid extra to get in early. This happens sometimes with high profile people. London Sinclair is supposed to be there before 7am, but is running late. Maureen is the only one who works weekends; the office manager does not work Saturdays.

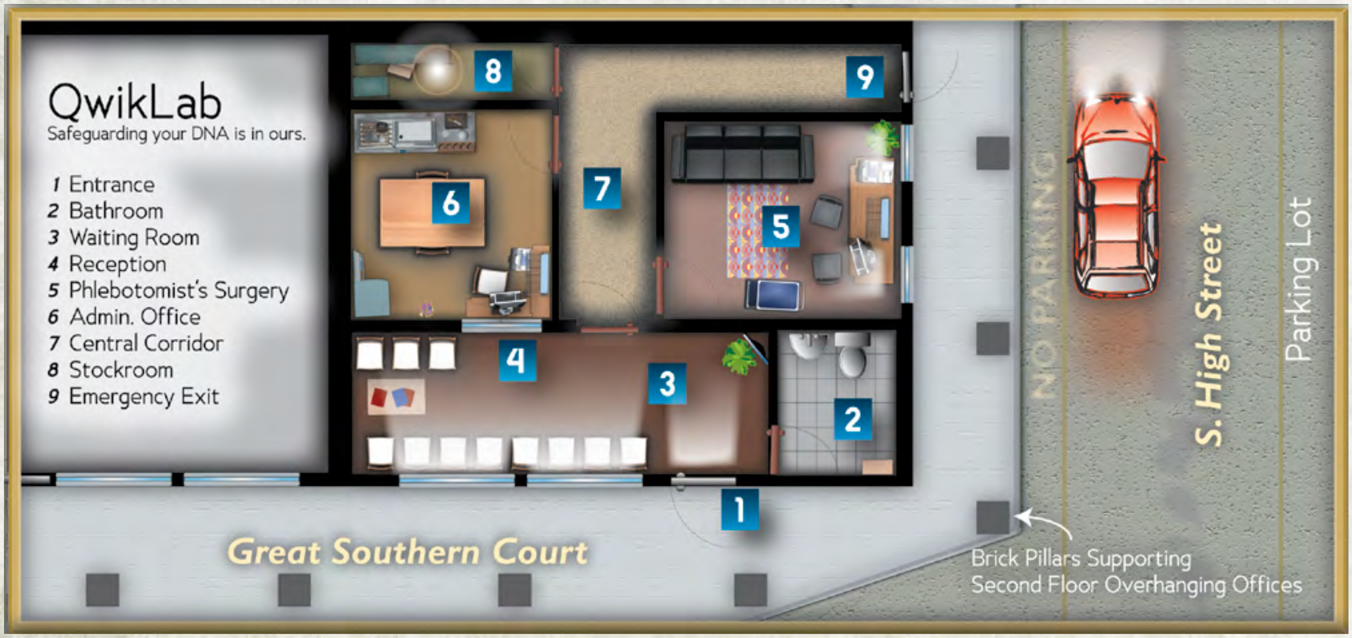
~7:05am: The limousine pulls up in front of the lab. The investigator should be arriving coincidentally and notice the limo. Already there, waiting at the still locked door into the lab, are a doddering old man in a wheelchair (James Pencik) and a 20-ish home health care worker (Shannisa Evans), whose job duties include taking Mr. Pencik for his doctor's appointments and blood draws. You may include others who are beginning to get aggravated about their appointments (such as a 7:20 appointment for a drug test that he has to take because he is a truck driver who was in an accident yesterday, or a nervous lawyer with a 7:30 appointment for a blood test to check for a suspected pituitary tumor. Both of these will be complaining about why the door is not open, calling the lab's office number to see what is going on and getting no answer, knocking on the door and getting no response).

~7:16am: Maureen opens the door finally, and apologizes profusely (taking the blame on herself for "running late." An **INT** check suggests that Maureen has actually been here for some time (the lights are already on, the computers are on, and the coffee is made).

~7:17am: The regular patients are able to access the waiting room, Maureen apologizing all the while. A couple of unusual looking people come in behind those who were waiting and are taken first. Anyone who has been to this lab before (**Luck** check) notes that it is unusual for the lab, which is cramped, to allow more people in the back than the person whose blood is actually drawn. Shanissa, who has been here many times before with a variety of patients, may mutter something under her breath about line cutters.

Who's in the Waiting Room?

The two unusual looking people are a woman in her late twenties and a man in his late twenties. The woman is wearing a crappy disguise of (designer, Versace) sweat clothes, $1,000 leather sneakers, oversized sunglasses, and a black wig under a ball cap. She is very beautiful in an ectomorphic yet well-developed sort of way, and even in her disguise looks somehow familiar. She hustles by and goes straight through the door, back to the blood drawing room, saying nothing and deliberately trying not to let anyone get a good look at her. Anyone trying to interact with her gets a nasty look from the hulking, 280-pound, 6'6" white male weightlifter, dripping in gold chains and rings, accompanying her. From the limited chance the investigators get to observe her, it would require an Extreme **INT** check to recognize her as notorious celebutante London Sinclair, most recently from having won a televised celebrity dance competition catering to yesterday's news. Although her bodyguard is less well-known, an Extreme **INT** check recognizes him as Jess Bell, the cousin, bodyguard, and factotum of London Sinclair who appeared in a few scenes of her short-lived reality television series *London Falling* from five years ago. A **Psychology** roll



reflects that each seem nervous and on guard.

~7:18am: A non-fumbled **Listen** roll overhears a disagreement from the back between a man (Jess Bell) and a woman (Maureen's voice). Jess is questioning whether "she has to sign this" Maureen is apologetic and insists "because we have to maintain chain of custody, it's the law." The man's voice mumbles something about "cameras."

~7:19–7:24am: The investigators and other NPCs can converse with one another in the waiting room about whatever they like. Mr. Pencik complains that the room is too cold; his faculties seem quite diminished although he approves of where Shanissa plans to take him next for breakfast (a diner called Eggstravaganza!). He is slightly grouchy but might converse about sports or chime in if someone expresses annoyance with the "line cutters."

Inside of the lab, Maureen turns on a camera mounted obviously on top of the computer. She draws one vial of blood from London, immediately puts it into a shipping box, seals it with a security seal (all on camera) and hands it to a courier who briefly comes on camera and then leaves. She dumps the needle and vial that she used into the sharps box.

~7:24am: A man sticks his head in the waiting room door, looks at the assembled people, and says "oops, wrong office, sorry" as he retreats. This is Frank Phelps, a Wuxie Pharma agent, a 50-ish white male dressed in jeans, a polo shirt and a ball cap. An **INT** check realizes that nowhere else in the office building is open. Frank is alone on this probe. He retreats to his car and drives around to the back of the building; promptly following him out might get his license plate number.

London Sinclair Goes In and Doesn't Come Out

~7:25am, Maureen the phlebotomist comes out and calls the 7am appointment (Mr. Pencik). By this time, the 7:30am and 7:40am appointments should have arrived. It takes a good five minutes to get Mr. Pencik sorted out and moving for the back. Ultimately, he goes back on his own two feet (with a shuffling gait), while Shanissa and his wheelchair remain in the waiting room. Neither the poorly disguised woman nor her bodyguard come back out through the waiting room. (They duck out the back through the fire exit; if anyone is out back, they see them spot Frank Phelps, hop into the waiting limo, and speed off with him snapping pictures and chasing after them. A Hard **Listen** roll might hear peeling tires in that direction from the waiting room.)

~7:26 am: A successful **Listen** check hears what sounds like a heavy door open and shut back beyond where Maureen and Mr. Pencik have gone.

Keeper's Note: *Jess Bell noted the arrival of Frank Phelps. He and London know that he is stalking them, but not why (they incorrectly assume that he is a tabloid reporter). As a result, they have resorted to a forensic countermeasure—taking their own trash with them. They conclude that the blood sample she just gave will be safe (they have paid for a courier to pick it up directly), but are worried about the phlebotomy needle. Concluding that it is not safe enough in the sharps bucket (in case she might test positive for drugs of abuse—certainly a possibility), London has taken advantage of Maureen's momentary absence to take her used needle out of the sharps disposal bucket and switch it for the one next prepped. In short, she has set the stage for Maureen to unwittingly use her dirty needle on Mr. Pencik. The thought that this might be a bad idea crosses her mind, and she rinses it off first with some rubbing alcohol. This is all caught on the camera in the blood drawing room.*

Chaos Erupts

~7:27am: Maureen shuts off the lab camera (which is only used for drug test chain of custody). She uses the rinsed-out phlebotomy needle on Mr. Pencik. Even the trace amount of London's inhuman ichor is too much and Pencik goes insane with pain and rage. He screams in agony at the top of his lungs, and stabs Maureen in the eye with the syringe up to and beyond the vial, killing her quickly. They both thrash and convulse, Maureen as she dies and Mr. Pencik as he disincorporates into a shower of goo, mutating and independently functioning body parts, and a separated head that wonders what the hell is going on. He remains sentient and aware of his surroundings (even capable of conversing and asking for help) for 10 minutes before he expires and his various body parts cease functioning on their own. All of this racket is easily heard from the waiting room. If no one else does, Shanissa calls 911. The players have seven minutes before the cops arrive.

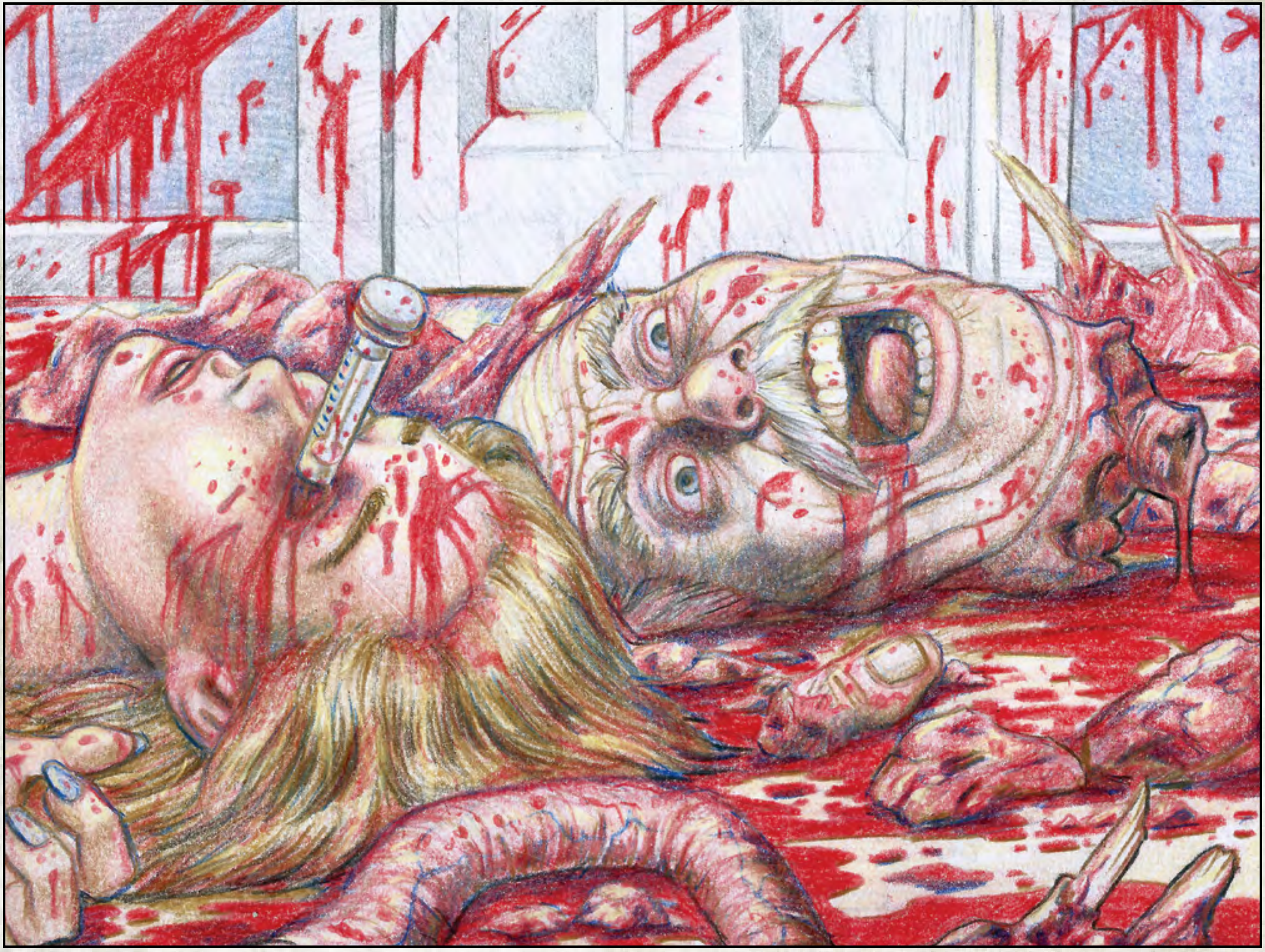
~7:34am: Two police officers arrive, take control of the situation and anyone still on scene, and call for massive amounts of backup when they see what it is in the lab room. One of them is killed by the remnants of Mr. Pencik if the investigators haven't killed it, and the second barricades the door pending backup arrival. Anyone still there is ordered to remain. It takes about half an hour for news crews to start arriving, and about four hours for the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to arrive and take the players into quarantine.

The Immediate Aftermath

Before the Cops Arrive

As noted, the investigators have seven minutes to do something before the police arrive. Shanissa cannot help herself but go into the lab room to find her charge. Assume that she fails her **SAN** roll, loses a full 10 **SAN**, and collapses into catatonia, providing easy prey for the Pieces. The other NPCs likely flee once the Pieces can get out of the lab door.

Assuming that some brave investigator heads back down the hall to see what all the fuss was about, they take a 1/1D10 **SAN** loss as they see writhing, self-possessed, mutating en-



trails and limbs (hereafter "the Pieces") of Mr. Pencik oozing, crawling and sprouting means of locomotion all over the lab room. Maureen dies quickly no matter how heroic the investigators are, and Mr. Pencik's head confusedly asks what is going on, as it briefly sprouts tentacles from its neck. Fortunately, it has only gotten a small dose of London's inhuman ichor and can only "survive" for about ten minutes.

The Pieces immediately set to attacking and devouring the rapidly expiring Maureen (two of them), the incoherent Shanissa (two of them), and six others are available to attack any nosy investigators who open the lab room door. Closing the door frustrates them in terms of getting out of that one room, but Shanissa has, of course, passed out in the doorway. Her 300-pound form must be moved (**STR** vs. **SIZ** 85, takes 1 round) to get the door closed (takes a second round).

Each investigator who avoids the lab room can attempt (in the time before the police arrive) to investigate one aspect of the phlebotomy lab's potential leads (detailed below). Any investigators who end up in combat with any Pieces, and then try to squeeze in some nosing around after a few rounds of scuffling or shoving the lab door closed, take a penalty die on their pertinent skill check.

The Office Computer

Accessible from the reception desk, the recent video feeds from the lab room can be viewed, but there is not enough time to download and forward them, on a **Computer Use** check. The investigators can see the blood draw, the syringe swap (and the fact that the syringe in question is stuck in Maureen's eye) and can identify London with an **INT** check (as she has to take off her disguise for the drug screen documentation). (Alternatively, they can perform the same function from the abbatoir that is the lab room if they manage to get control of it somehow.) They can also see London and Jess leave from the fire exit. Failing but not fumbling the check results in them still fiddling with the system, watching the video, when the first cops arrive.

The Syringe

Retrieving the syringe can be accomplished with a Hard **DEX** check (subject to a penalty die if the Pieces are still active when attempted). It has been really wedged into poor Maureen, and getting it out is a challenge likely requiring the use of forceps and some digging.

If successfully retrieved and smuggled out, it is a treasure trove of information. If analyzed privately by an investigator or someone "off the grid" whom they trust, the information

THE PIECES, Scuttling, Mutated, Tentacular Former Body Parts

STR 55	CON 55	SIZ 25	INT 0	POW 55
DEX 55				HP 11

Damage Bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 8 (including along walls and ceilings)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10), 1D6 damage of flailing, strangling and biting with spontaneously generating, toothy maws.
Dodge 50% (25/10)
Skills: Stealth 50%, Open Lab Room Door 0%
Defenses: None above base.
Spells: None
Sanity Loss: 0/1D6 for seeing one Piece, 1/1D10 for the entire tableau.

may stay private (although their analyst may well want to send it to the CDC). Four different sorts of DNA are found on it. One is human female (Maureen's), one is human male (Mr. Pencik), one was a different sort of human female with some odd genetic markers (only traces of it were found in the needle), and the rest was incomprehensible—volatile, rapidly mutating and chimeric (both male and female).

If public databases are queried about the sort with the odd genetic markers, the CDC is eventually notified of the query (as it is monitoring these genetic markers via a network of academic community informants). Optionally, they may be approached by B.B. Bell, a post-graduate researcher into Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome, or noticed by the Patriarch, depending on whether you wish to run "**Separation Anxiety**" as a side adventure. The third sort of DNA recovered (belonging to London Sinclair, although the lab won't know that) shows "similar" markers to Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome, but with further mutations. It proved very difficult to analyze, reacting violently with any other DNA it was directly mixed with, especially blood.

If it is sent out to a lab, the same information is gathered. However, any third-party lab analysis gets transmitted to the CDC, and from there, transmitted to Wuxie Pharma by its CDC mole. Wuxie then gets involved in the proceedings (see section below), and if the investigators have avoided quarantine, the CDC has a lead to try and track them down.

The Security Cameras

Either the front door security camera or the rear door security camera can be viewed with a simple **Computer Use** roll in the time permitted from the reception desk computer; a Hard **Computer Use** success allows both to be seen and one still to be quickly printed out. The front door footage is only mildly revealing; the man who stuck his head in acts furtively (looking around and listening at the door before opening it, but betrays no sign of actually being lost). The fire exit door camera shows the limo pull up and wait; the courier enters (with Maureen's assistance) and leaves; Frank Phelps' car drives by; the woman in the wig and her bodyguard leave in a hurry; and both the limo and Frank Phelps' car leave the back lot in rapid succession. The license plate on Frank Phelps' car appears in a blurry segment. Later, a still of it can be cleaned up and made out with a successful **Art (Photography)** or **Computer Use** check.

A successful **Luck**, **Fast Talk** or **Stealth** roll amid the chaos and fleeing patients avoids any of the NPCs or late arriving police from noticing such information gathering.

A Little Later, and Quarantine

Any people that had an appointment at the phlebotomy lab are earnestly and vigorously sought by local authorities, then U.S. Homeland Security in connection with the CDC Anyone who waits for the police, or voluntarily turn themselves in later, are politely detained, questioned by local police, and then questioned by Homeland Security. It (routinely) searches their places of residence, workplaces, and electronic devices, and takes action on any criminal activity this search may detect. Finally, they are quarantined by the CDC for 48 hours and subjected to extensive testing for pathogens. During this time, most detainees (ones not found to have any criminal exposure or terrorist ties) are treated politely, if firmly, at a local infectious disease ward; they are allowed to have access to the Internet and to call whomever they like. Legal efforts to extricate them are opposed by U.S. Dept. of Justice attorneys, and fail upon their assurances that as soon as they are cleared of "suspected bioagents" they will be released. Indeed, they are released after 48 hours, while being given no information other than a clean bill of health and a "polite suggestion" to just go home and let the national security experts handle it.

The news cycle kicks into full gear on the carnage at the phlebotomy lab. A typical body count for what is described as

A RECAP OF FARNSWORTH/BELL SYNDROME—EASILY AVAILABLE INFORMATION

Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome ("FBS") is a rare, recessive, inherited condition, prevalent in certain lines of the Farnsworth and Bell families, and believed to have originated with a male founder mutation arising in Kentucky in the mid-19th century. Only people who inherit two copies of the mutated gene (both descended from the founder) are affected.

FBS is of research interest because of its potential medical applications. Those with FBS are taller and thinner than normal, with very fair skin, black straight hair, and actually black irises. They have excellent reflexes but brittle bones and extraordinarily long, slender digits. Their blood is very quick to clot; some need to take blood thinners as they age. This last condition is what is of potential medical value.

a "terrorist attack using a highly toxic gas" can be assumed to have been 2D6 police and first responders before the Pieces are neutralized. It dominates the news cycle for weeks and the investigators and other NPCs (try as they might) who submit to quarantine have their names and faces plastered all over the news. News crews show up at their houses and places of work with cameras, looking for comments from the neighbors, coworkers, and family members. Any investigators going to the news outlets with a more accurate version of events is heard out but no one runs with a "monster" story, although a suggestion is floated that perhaps the "toxic gas" caused some brain damage. People who may have saved a cop (or even tried) are portrayed heroically and gain 20% to **Credit Rating**.

Anyone who absented themselves from the immediate aftermath and who can be identified from the appointment log or security cameras is portrayed as a "person of interest" in a terrorism investigation, "not a suspect," and the public is urged to report any sightings to the Dept. of Homeland Security or local police. Avoiding capture should be difficult. Such people are treated harshly and possibly charged with obstruction of justice, but ultimately, they make bail and clear quarantine. They are described as "uncooperative" on the news, with a loss of 20% to their **Credit Rating**.

Mr. Pencik is completely innocent and digging into his background reveals nothing except a sick old man who needed blood tests to check his medication levels. He is a retired autoworker with no criminal record, who was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Wuxie Pharmaceuticals and Their Actions

A lot of companies and people in the pharmaceutical industry have heard of Wuxie Pharmaceuticals, courtesy of a sales representative named Jen Jenkins, who seems to be its only public face. And she is its only public face. She receives anonymous pay and anonymous instruction, from whoever the owners are, via encrypted email at her office in Los Angeles (a rented office in an office sharing suite). There's a listed phone number, an "info@wuxie" email address that goes to Marie, a receptionist who knows nothing, and Ms. Jenkins.

She is an arranger and negotiator; Wuxie manufactures small batch, high price, usually biological-based drugs for special purposes (often experimental). She contracts for research and manufacturer and contracts for distribution. These are typically for genetic defects or blood diseases, and their website is open about the keystone of their business: research into, and application of, the genetic potential in Farnsworth-Bell Syndrome.

Ms. Jenkins is a ruthless, amoral snake, who realizes that Wuxie is not all it seems. For one thing, she does not know who the owners are, other than having concluded that they live in the L.A. area. She can contact them via email, but that's the only way. The person who recruited her ten years ago worked for a headhunter and promptly disappeared. She is responsible for keeping the books and having the taxes done, so she is aware that Wuxie (even with its low volume) nets millions of dollars per year. And she gets all of it; the owners take nothing and give her the profits as an annual bonus. The patents and I.P. that Wuxie has developed over the years is so valuable that it could be sold for hundreds of millions; she is constantly getting offers to relay, but the owners just don't care.

Jen has an idea, but only an idea, of the real agenda. She knows that the owners are very, very interested in Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome, and are funding research into it at Case Western Reserve University through a grant. (See "**Separation Anxiety**" for more details). She also knows that the owners want to keep very close tabs on London Sinclair, who, to her eyes, seems to have FBS. She has also picked up that the owners don't like Ms. Sinclair at all; she has one goon, Frank Phelps, on retainer to keep tabs and dig up dirt on her.

Finally, every now and then, she is asked to hire some goons who don't ask questions, pay them very well, and have them do something illegal, like eliminate someone or steal something. She does what she's told, using an established network of procurers, middlemen, and cutouts.

When word of the disaster at the phlebotomy lab in Cleveland leaks out, she initially thought nothing of it, until her email starts blowing up with emails from the owners. Then one of them, a female, actually called her from a burner phone at the office—unheard of! This is it, the whole point of Wuxie, she was told. It must have been a biohazard containment issue, she is advised, and the biohazard must have involved London Sinclair. London must be found and either brought to justice or killed in a plausibly deniable way. Ideally, several bio-samples from London should also be gathered.

Jenkins has long already had one of her best contractors, Frank Phelps, digging up dirt on London Sinclair, but now adds a second, Lori Brown, to the project. Frank Phelps and Lori Brown (not their real names) are "problem solvers," each about 50 years of age, with extensive U.S. counterintelligence backgrounds. Frank Phelps has already been keeping tabs on London for years and is not a cold-blooded killer, but is ruthless. Lori Brown is a high-functioning sociopath and assassin with no morals, fear, or compunctions. They are told that they must eliminate London Sinclair without it being traced back to Wuxie, and to spare no expense or effort. As the scenario moves forward, they are rarely seen together, staying in touch over encrypted email and burner phones.

They have a plan: gaslight London into going to not just rehab, but a particular rehab where she has been before when things have been at their worst, The Ferguson Clinic. Since London's last visit, Wuxie has compromised (with a threat of blackmail) the clinic's owner, Dr. Adam Ferguson, into arranging for Ms. Sinclair to have a fatal "accident" at his clinic. Her body will be harvested and revenge will be had.

Frank and Lori will be conducting parallel efforts to the investigators, who might well keep tripping over signs of them. Frank and Lori are slow to kill interfering investigators unless they are confident that they will succeed and get away with it, in which case they have no compunctions. They have also been given something very special and expensive, with instructions (from the owners) to use it: a tiny sample of DNA whose provenance they will not comment on.

Who Owns Wuxie and What Are They Up To?

The owners are Robert and Emily Chang. Robert and Emily are both doctors, a dermatologist and a cosmetic surgeon, respectively, practicing and living in Beverly Hills. Their son, James, was London Sinclair's high school boyfriend, and was accidentally killed when he had unprotected sex with her in high school. (See below for more details.) They think (correctly) that exposure to her blood caused James to die much like Mr. Pencik did. Maddened by grief and unable to prove anything (it was truly an accident), they want revenge and to purge "that freak" from the planet. They don't really understand the Mythos or what they are dealing with at all, but they want to kill her and aren't sure how to accomplish that effectively without getting caught. They have figured out that there is something different (they think of it in terms of "mutation") about London Sinclair, and know that she has survived some things that she shouldn't.

The DNA provided to Frank and Lori belongs to London Sinclair. The Changs kept the dirty sheets left behind when their son, James, died, and isolated the female DNA from it. They want to use it in a splashy way that will hopefully get London's attention and gaslight her into a trap that they have set. (See **The Ferguson Clinic**, below.)

Frank Phelps Reaches Out (Or is Grabbed)

It is actually very easy in the modern United States to run a license plate. Even if no investigator has access to law enforcement databases, anyone with access to legal research or skip trace databases like Westlaw or Lexis, and who is willing to check the right box for permission (including "skip tracing" or "use in litigation") can run a license plate. Frank was using his own car in the hope that London would be provoked into trying to find him and confront him, giving him an opportunity to interact with her or her people and gain some intelligence. When he heard about the movie opportunity, he kept tabs on her, deduced that she would probably try to go to Cleveland to a lab she had used before, and pre-positioned himself there.

If they missed Frank's license plate, he will eventually reach out to them to see what they know. A private investigator with a reputation for occult expertise is someone that he is likely to reach out to, with a seeming offer of cooperation and intelligence exchange. Frank will portray himself, not entirely inaccurately, as a fellow "investigator of the weird" and offer to share intelligence.

Investigating Frank Phelps

Frank Phelps is a fake identity, one designed to pass casual background scrutiny. An **Appraise** check made against his **Craft (Forgery)** skill of 40% realizes that the "Frank Phelps" identity is a good fake: a valid driver's license, social security number, and social media history, but one with holes in it (e.g., a very limited credit history; it all seems to start up about two years ago at the same time). The address on his driver's license pans out, though; an apartment in a security high rise in Los Angeles.

Getting ahold of his fingerprints, somehow, leads to some interesting complications. (For example, they might surreptitiously obtain them after meeting him, or find them on the door of the phlebotomy lab.) U.S. Federal law enforcement agents can learn that his real name is Francis Mulholland, and that he is a retired counterintelligence agent with the Defense Intelligence Agency ("DIA"). However, this leads to shove back and a visit from the DIA, who want to know why one of their retired agents is being nosed into. Plausible requests (**Persuade** or **Law** check) from Federal law enforcement agents (i.e., we think he needs to be quarantined) get his last known address, which is the same as that of Frank Phelps. If questioned about his identity and background, Frank simply has no comment other than "what I did before trying to track this monster down isn't relevant, is it?"

Frank's apartment is on the second floor of the building and the lobby door has a doorman and a security camera that will have to be navigated, either with a show of law enforcement credentials and/or a warrant or a ruse.

The Tail

If they start tailing Frank or otherwise poking into his business, Lori will start surveilling and investigating them, feeding the information to Frank. She is very good at avoiding notice (**Stealth** 80%). If she is "made" she will retreat; if cornered, she will fight to the death if need be and stoop to any means necessary (including kneecapping a nearby child as a distraction) to escape. Frank refuses to comment one way or another as to whether he is working with anyone else "for operational security reasons."

What Frank Knows

Eventually, Frank will either invite the investigators to his apartment or they will break into it. In all likelihood, unless they have done an excellent job of staying off the grid and been careful in their approach, he will be expecting them and know who they are. He will invite them in, give his (fake) name, identify himself as a retired government employee and current private detective, and advise that they seem to be working toward common ends. He will propose an alliance and the sharing of information.

You should roleplay out the interaction with Frank, and it may take some time and several encounters for an uneasy alliance to form. Frank, however, is motivated to get law enforcement and/or occult investigators interested in harassing London Sinclair at this moment in time, so he will try to lay out his case for her being "some kind of monster," and try to convince them to help. He doesn't want to do "anything illegal, just get some proof or get her to make a mistake." He is, in fact, telling the truth (he passes **Psychology** rolls unfazed), he simply does not need to tell them who he is working for or what their motivations might be. His case consists of:

- Making sure that the investigators know the Commonly **Known Information about London Sinclair** (below).
- Telling them about **The Prior Incident** (below), of which he has a crime scene photo, and drawing the parallels to the phlebotomy lab incident.
- Showing them the **FindYourFamily.com** letter (below).
- Showing them the unexpurgated version of the sex tape with London and her cousin, Jess Bell. (He puts a fine point on it: "don't you see? He's another one of them, so she can have sex with him safely! Everyone else gets popped like a zit"!)
- And finally, depending on how he gauges their reaction and whether he knows (or can sense) that the investigators have experience with "monsters" (he has no understanding of the scope of the Mythos as such), he may let them review his initial, unexpurgated draft of *Legends and Folklore of Appalachia*.

It should be difficult to truly get the drop on Frank and break into his apartment unexpected. If they somehow do, however, they may get a look at Frank's entire dossier, kept on a laptop in a password protected folder named "Project Gaslight." This contains the information that Frank (and Wuxie Pharma) have gathered on London Sinclair, without Frank deciding what they need to know and what they don't.

There are several bigger prizes that are available to people who are rifling through Frank's possessions without his knowledge or consent, including with a properly issued search warrant.

The first real prize is Frank's burner phone, which he usually has on his person and destroys, if he is able to, before he is cornered or apprehended. Burglars somehow managing to access his apartment while he is present might manage to steal it or go through it, as might people catching him by surprise with a show (or application) of force. This is of special value because it will show numerous calls between his phone and another burner phone carried by Lori, who is often nearby. (Each phone shows up on the other's GPS tracker, and it rings if called, at least until Lori learns that Frank's phone has been compromised.) It also shows numerous calls between Frank and Jen Jenkins at Wuxie Pharma, which leads to her.

The second real prize is his annotated and supplemented copy of a suppressed first draft of *Legends and Folklore of Appalachia*. This minor Mythos tome could lead into several other adventures, but the annotations and supplementations in this copy are clearly concerned with the Farnsworth/Bell clan. (It is possible that Frank might let investigators that he is getting along with very well review a scanned copy of this, to motivate them into helping him hound and pressure London Sinclair.)

Like the regular version, this version of the tome is an oral history compilation generated by several Miskatonic U. field historians in the 1920s. The book contains information on the historic Farnsworth/Bell clan, an odd-looking family matching the description of Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome hybrids: taller and thinner than normal, with very fair skin, black straight hair, and actually black irises. They have excellent reflexes but brittle bones and extraordinarily long, slender digits. Their blood is very quick to clot. They are led by a reputed sorcerer named James Farnsworth. James was reportedly born in Kentucky in 1808, to a single mother and reputed witch. The family was said to be involved in devil worship at their compound in rural Leshay County, Kentucky, until a militia dispersed them. Many Farnsworths were killed, but several

THE THEME AND HOW TO HIGHLIGHT IT

The theme of this adventure, of course, is "who's the monster," and you should reinforce this through the NPCs various personalities and reactions. Frank is a sneak and a mercenary but honestly thinks that his cause is just—London is, to all evidence, an inhuman monstrosity despite her appearance. His view of "humanity" is a narrow and orthodox one, and if he gets comfortable with the investigators, some of his racist and misogynist tendencies might start to slip out. He is a xenophobe and London is an "other," only a dangerous one. He speaks of her in terms like "alien," "terrorist," and uses derogatory terms to the extent that your players will understand that it is illustrative. London is arrogant and petulant, but scared and (mentally speaking) human. Lori is human, but a sociopath with no good side, and she should do awful things throughout the adventure, usually from the shadows, for the investigators to find (Dr. Clek's fate being the primary example). The Changs are seeking bloody vengeance for their son and you're either with them or against them. If you're with them, they are damaged goods but normal. If you're against them, they will kill you out of a mammalian revenge drive. Jess Bell is a cultist; a somewhat restrained one that looks and acts human most of the time, but has sacrificed people in the family's orchard and cannibalized their remains. It just seems normal to him (again, you're either part of the family or an "other," and he will go on rants about "strangers," by which he means "anyone not a Farnsworth/Bell"). Dr. Ferguson is human, but weak, sadistic, and depraved. And London is a monster, albeit a tortured and non-malicious one who just wants to live a human life.

(including James) escaped. The report of the raid notes that it often took several gunshots to kill a Farnsworth, but that their bones were brittle, and that they oozed an odd, thick, blackish ichor when shot.

A particularly disturbing passage relates that a distant Farnsworth cousin had to be rescued by the militia from a root cellar, where she had been chained, sliced open and mutilated, and starved for weeks. The imprisoned woman sadly died, which greatly upset the extended family. They described her ordeal as the "rite of passage for all true Farnsworths, separating the wheat from the chaff."

This unexpurgated version has additional information about the birth and background of James Farnsworth. It tells how his mother and leader of the earliest iteration of the cult, Epiphany Farnsworth, an elderly woman then in her 70s, decided on a display of power to cow some rebellious followers. She had promised (and with limited success, succeeded) in making "wishes come true" by "opening doors to The Realm of the Far Side of the Moon" and trucking with "The Slippery Things that Hold Sway There." To prove her devotion and power, she called one forth before the assembled believers—and then things got weird. See *Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #1*, below.

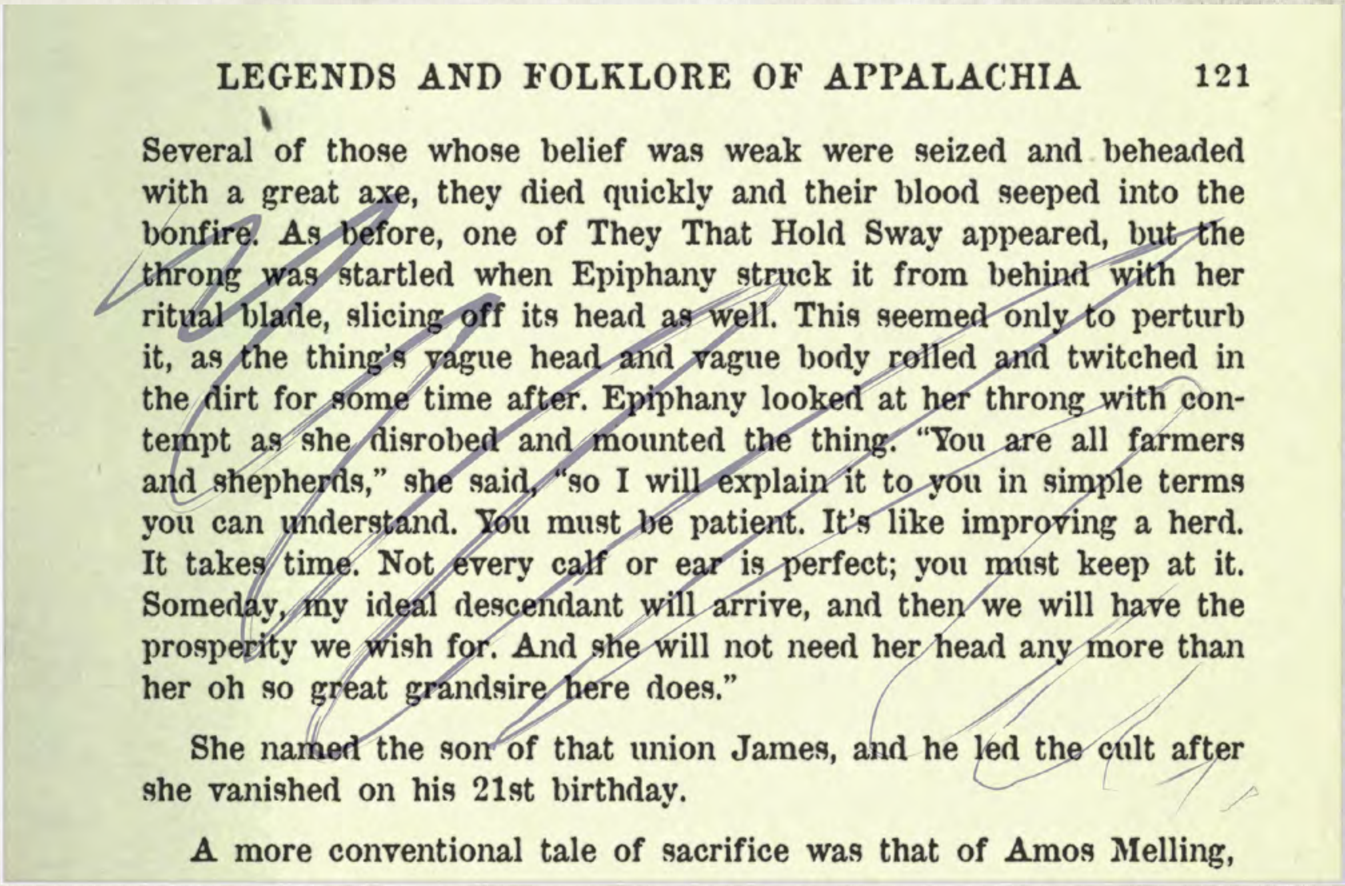
The third real prize is his email account, which has several additional layers of security on it (requiring an Extreme **Computer Use** check to hack into). This level of security itself should cause the investigators to wonder about Frank. If they manage to get into this, they also learn that:

- He has a confederate named Lori Brown who is deliberately staying in the shadows but is constantly advocating more violence.
- He is being paid to investigate London Sinclair by a company called Wuxie Pharma in Los Angeles.
- Wuxie wants London Sinclair dead for some apparent past offense.
- Wuxie has set a trap for her, and is trying to scare her and exert psychological pressure on her to move her in the direction of the trap.
- He is constantly urged to get bio-samples from her if at all possible, using "maximum containment precautions."

Legends and Folklore of Appalachia (Suppressed First Draft)

Sanity Loss: 1D4
Cthulhu Mythos: +2 percentiles
Mythos Rating: 6
Study: 1 week
Spells Available: Create Gate of Oneirology, Contact Moonbeast, Join the Worlds Together (allows creation of viable human/Moonbeast hybrid)

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #1



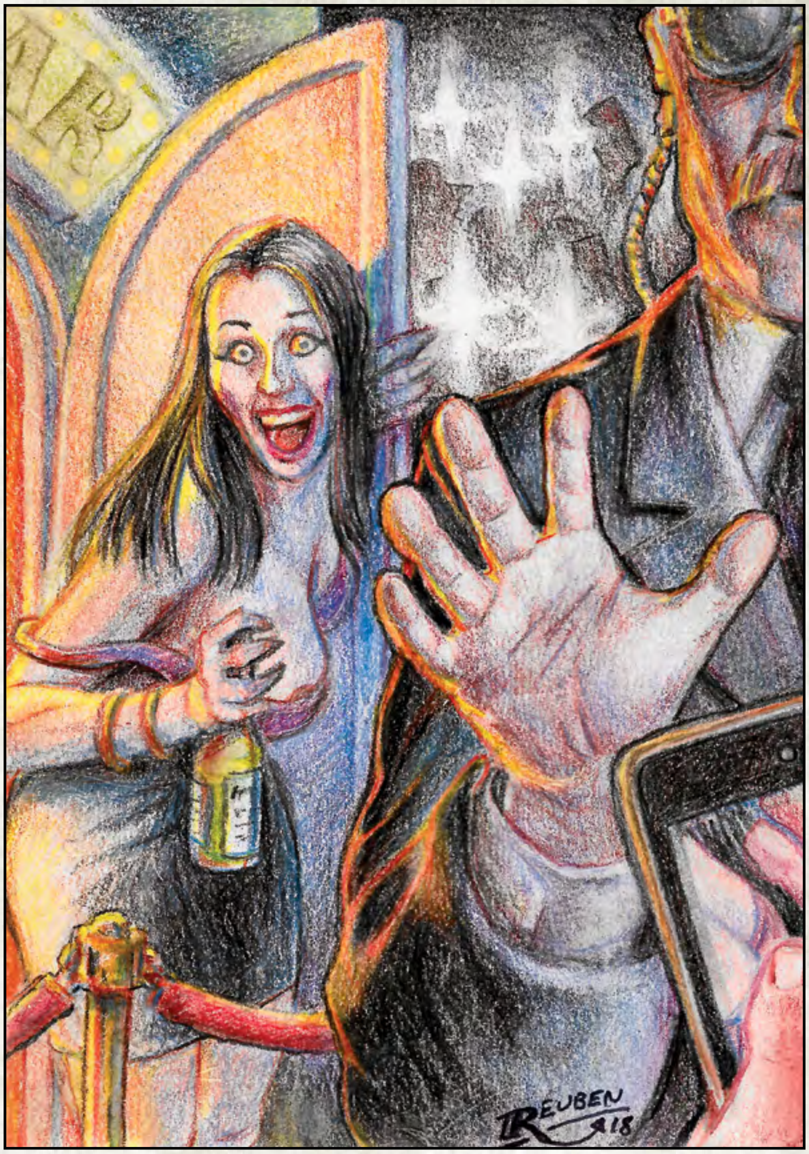
LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE OF APPALACHIA 121

Several of those whose belief was weak were seized and beheaded with a great axe, they died quickly and their blood seeped into the bonfire. As before, one of They That Hold Sway appeared, but the throng was startled when Epiphany struck it from behind with her ritual blade, slicing off its head as well. This seemed only to perturb it, as the thing's vague head and vague body rolled and twitched in the dirt for some time after. Epiphany looked at her throng with contempt as she disrobed and mounted the thing. "You are all farmers and shepherds," she said, "so I will explain it to you in simple terms you can understand. You must be patient. It's like improving a herd. It takes time. Not every calf or ear is perfect; you must keep at it. Someday, my ideal descendant will arrive, and then we will have the prosperity we wish for. And she will not need her head any more than her oh so great grandsire here does."

She named the son of that union James, and he led the cult after she vanished on his 21st birthday.

A more conventional tale of sacrifice was that of Amos Melling,

- The investigators' backgrounds are provided, in report format, and his evaluations of them to date as potential allies are also provided. He seems honestly interested in having them as allies.



The Prior Incident

It is commonly known information (see below) that there was a fatal accident on the set of London Sinclair's bottom-of-the-cable-barrel, one season reality TV show, *London Falling*, which aired in 2012 but still reruns occasionally and can be watched on subscription services. This fatal accident is what caused the show to be cancelled: London refused to participate any further despite good ratings. Every scrap of official information that can easily be dug about this incident (including police reports, autopsy reports, and mainstream news coverage) says that a makeup artist on the set, Vilma Rodrigues, suffered a fatal heart attack and died tragically. Interviews with London about the incident reflect genuine sadness; she describes Vilma as a good person and a friend and "simply didn't want to carry on the show under those kinds of circumstances."

What Frank has that calls the official record into question is illegally recorded wirecam footage taken by an overly inquisitive member of the paparazzi, trying to catch London in an embarrassing position and sell the resulting images (or extort her with them). (A wirecam is a small video recording device that uses a piece of fiber optic cable as a lens, allowing it to be snaked in through a hole in the wall or other small opening.) He will not reveal his source, but will tell the investigators (truthfully) that he paid $1,000,000 for the footage and that he is taking a big chance by even showing this to them. He cannot use it in court because of how it was obtained (a **Law** roll suggests that this claim is dubious, but certainly he would also be subject to prosecution). As long as he does not fear arrest (for anything serious), he shows it to them anyway, in order to gain their trust.

The footage is only about twenty seconds long and appears to have been shot from inside the back seat of a car, pointing toward the curbside door. It shows London, very intoxicated and falling out of her barely-there dress, stumbling out of a night club and getting into the back of a limo. Jess Bell is driving. Jess says "wow, how many bottles did you drink?" (Her implausible answers were a running joke on the show.) Her answer (interspersed with enough foul language that it seems she must be unaware that she is on camera): "!@#$$%^ six bottles of scotch, as though it's any of your !@#$%%^^ business, you %$%^&&** farmboy hick $^&**(((from East **&^%%$$, Ohio." She slams her hand in the car door in her drunkenness, causing her hand to bleed. She yells, sucks on her sore fingers, and absentmindedly shakes it while it is bleeding. To her left, out of camera range, there is a horrendous screech and blood obscures the camera. Inhuman gurgling noises can be heard for about five seconds, after which the footage ends. **SAN** loss is 0/1.

Investigators who pause to think about it (**INT** roll) also realize that if this apparently truthful comment about six bottles of scotch is even close to true, she should be dead, not just drunk. Further investigation of the provenance of this footage can be found under the **Paparazzi** section, below.

FindYourFamily.com

Because he does not have law enforcement credentials, Phelps has only gotten part of the story from this avenue of investigation. A source (actually his employer, Wuxie Pharma) gave him a vial with some spit in it, ostensibly from London Sinclair, and asked him to quietly try to have its DNA typed. (The provenance, again, of the spit sample is addressed under the **Paparazzi** section, below.) Phelps had the idea to open up an account on a consumer-oriented DNA site, FindYourFamily.com, under the deliberately transparent pseudonym Rose St. Clair. He was trying to cause some trouble and see what reaction he got.

What he got was a letter to the P.O. Box he set up for the purpose from the CDC inviting "Ms. St. Clair" to come in for a chat about her "health conditions." That wasn't what he expected, so he dropped it, but why would they do that, he asks rhetorically?

Federal law enforcement requests about this incident get referred to the CDC, which cooperates with an ongoing Federal investigation. All other requests are completely ignored. Federal law enforcement is told that the CDC dug into this request for several reasons. The sample was from a female and was human albeit with numerous odd genetic markers, similar to but far more extensive than previously documented cases of Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome. More worrisome is that it was highly bioactive, causing a violent reaction when exposed to DNA sequencing enzymes. Most worrisome is that when they called in the CDC and with their help, did manage to sequence the DNA, numerous degraded and repeated genomes were found, consistent with severe inbreeding. The sample came from someone whose father and several members of her maternal lineage were related by blood, suggesting that the father impregnated not just her mother but possibly her grandmother and great-grandmother as well.

Interview, Jess Bell

Jess Bell is far easier to interview than London. Most requests for interviews, pressers, comments, donations, public appearances, gigs, or other demands for London's attention go first through her public relations agency, Blaze of Glory, based outside of Chicago. Then they go to Jess for filtering. Their website is professional and advertises upcoming, open auditions for "edgy" young talent in any field, as well as providing other forms of entertainment-related representation.

Blaze of Glory is a legitimate, broad-based talent agency with nice suburban offices. Inquiries about represented talent (such as London) or who showed up for an audition are referred to Maude Sciezki, the general manager. How cooperative Maude is depends on who is doing the asking. If the investigators are law enforcement, she puts them in touch with Jess after some initial resistance, and completely caves to any threats involving warrants. Otherwise, a **Fast Talk** or **Credit Rating** check is appropriate to get put in touch with Jess; she is interested in money, not emotional pleas.

Jess Bell is a 35-year-old cultist with good social skills. He is London's "cousin" (actually, half-brother, both are the natural children of the Patriarch), lover, bodyguard, and gatekeeper all at the same time. His job is simply to help her do whatever she wants to do and keep her safe; he does not breathe a word of the Mythos, cult activity, or anything of that nature to her. He was sent to infiltrate her life by the Patriarch when London began to achieve notoriety. He is, of course, responsible for causing the car accident that killed London's adoptive parents—something she does not suspect—to render her emotionally vulnerable and pave the way for him to establish himself in her life.

He is a huge, imposing dude, bearing all the obvious signs of Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome yet hardly the wispy ectomorph that most of them are. He cultivates the look of an older beach thug, and has an Appalachian accent. He is polite to people with ostensible projects for London to work on, and has zero patience for people asking questions about her personal life or non-public history. Hinting around him about most Mythos provokes no response from him; he just thinks the questioner is weird and terminates the interview, and he does not grasp parts of the Mythos that do not involve him. Asking questions about the Farnsworth/Bell family, its history, the family's medical quirks, or hinting at any knowledge peculiar to the cult provokes a noticeable start and he abruptly ends questioning.

Asking if he is sleeping with London (he is) results in a fist fight (at least). In his enraged state, a successful **Fast Talk** or **Luck** check might have him angrily sputter something about "that prick Jules Thomas putting them up to this." Having dropped the name by accident, he will not offer further details, realizing that he made a mistake.

Law enforcement requests to speak to London (not backed by an arrest warrant, which there is no basis for) are politely put off—he'll talk to the lawyers and get back to them. He then accelerates the plan to get London into rehab.

He is utterly immune to **Intimidation** or torture (which, as a "core" Farnsworth/Bell clan member, he rather enjoys).

All About London Sinclair

London is a Fosterling of the Old Ones, in effect. If you get right down to it, her father is a mostly-human appearing hybrid between a nameless Moonbeast priest and a witch. By reinforcing his own contribution to the gene pool (going around making babies with his own descendants), two centuries of loosely controlled genetic experimentation finally bore fruit. The signs were there when London's mother, a Farnsworth/Bell family cultists residing at the family's Darke County compound, gave birth: London emerged unusually precocious and absorbed the placenta and afterbirth as she lay on the birthing table. Sensing success, the Patriarch decapitated the infant with his ceremonial dagger right then and there. It didn't faze her much, and he stuck her head right back on to her shoulders and watched it reattach. It was time for the second phase of his mother's master plan: insinuate this blessed child into the world and let her rise to rulership.

"Phase Two" got off to a promising start. The Patriarch managed to get London adopted by a Hollywood power couple, the Sinclairs, who wanted children but decided they were too busy (and too vain) to procreate themselves. She grew and flourished, getting into acting, singing, and sports, becoming popular and seeming to be on a positive career track. All that he had to do was to run occasional interference for her, so that she would not be "outed" until the right time. Mostly this consisted of bribing her doctors to fake test results and/or positioning allies as her health care providers (including her childhood nanny).

The Patriarch's plans went awry when London was a junior in high school. She ducked her nanny and decided to have a casual sexual encounter with James Chang, a boy she liked but didn't love, as an act of teenage rebellion. As soon as he was exposed to her bodily fluids, he mutated, exploded all over his bedroom, and died horribly. London, who up until that point really did not understand that she had anything other than an odd but mostly innocuous version of a minor genetic variation, lost it. She was put under psychiatric care with Dr. Hans Clek at UCLA, began to drink and abuse sedatives and mood stabilizers, and suffer dreams of the paternal side of her lineage: slippery things from the dark side of the Dreamlands' moon, whipping and torturing human and humanlike things in dank galleys and vast slave pits. It took several months and she never fully recovered, and she feels a great deal of honest guilt for whatever happened to James. This rendered her somewhat paranoid, slow to trust anyone, and very leery of intimate physical contact with "normal people."

This is also when society started to harass her. Obviously, this slip of a girl did not reduce a high school acquaintance to a puree in his own bedroom. She smartly admitted to everything but that to the police and to his parents, claiming to have left James alive after they had sex. The police had no basis to arrest her, but his parents suspected something, and they were right. They have spent the past 10 years trying to figure out what happened (through Wuxie Pharma) and either kill her or bring her to justice for James' "murder." Although they needed little prompting to chase around a gorgeous actress/model/singer/athlete who obviously hates being followed around, the paparazzi have also been put on her tail. Wuxie pays paparazzi for salacious tidbits about her, anything to put pressure on her and have her crack up and let something slip.

The Sinclairs sensed that something was wrong and concluded that she had killed James by accident. They decided to cover for her, get her psychiatric help, and pull her back out of the spotlight a bit, encouraging her to focus on track and avoid other spotlights. This threatened the Patriarch's grandiose plan to reveal her as his daughter once she had conquered Hollywood as evidence of his family's superiority and revel in the glory. So he acted. He had Jess Bell sabotage the brakes on the family's car, and arranged for them to fail when they tried to brake behind a stopped semi-trailer, causing a fatal underride accident. All three were decapitated, but (to London's horror), this didn't bother her too much. She simply oozed over and stuck her head right back on her shoulders again.

This led to the Patriarch visiting her in the psychiatric ward as she struggled to cope with this most recent turn of events. He explained to her that she was not like other people, that she needed to avoid sharing blood or bodily fluids with other people who weren't like her, and that he was "part of her true family" and would "watch over her." He introduced her to Jess, who was her "cousin" and would "do whatever she wanted him to do." He encouraged her to avoid athletics, avoid psychiatrists, and focus on her acting career. She would need fame and money for the challenges ahead.

She threw the weirdo out, but Jess Bell was persistent, finally managing to gain her trust.

Today, nine years later, London Sinclair is still struggling to cope with all of this. She "copes" with enormous amounts of drugs and alcohol, which, because of her physiology, have only a limited effect on her. She really can drink six bottles of scotch and only get drunk. She doesn't avoid psychiatrists; indeed, she is heavily reliant on them to get through life at all. The only one she really trusts is Dr. Clek, but Jess fights with her every time she wants to go see him. And because she is so in the public eye—partly because of her career and notoriety, partly because she is such a train wreck, and partly because Wuxie fans the paparazzi's flames and has investigators track her every move—slipping away to do anything is nearly a lost cause.

When pushed really hard, she has a pattern of retreating into rehab clinics, which is what Wuxie Pharma is banking on.

What She Knows and What She Doesn't

London knows that something is off about her and that she's not completely human. Hell, she got decapitated and it only slowed her down a little; the broken legs from the car accident took longer to heal than the decapitation. She's also very fast, her bones break easily, and she can wrap men (and women) around her little finger. She is moderately intelligent, but no genius, and so she blunders and makes mistakes that land her in more trouble.

She doesn't want any of this, but she needs money to fuel her self-medication and to pay the lawyers, doctors, and agents to keep the paparazzi away from her. It's a vicious cycle. She knows nothing of the Mythos at all beyond what she has dreamt of.

She is a sad, tortured, and lonely person who has serious challenges to her sanity that are not her fault. She is basically decent but seriously psychologically damaged, while being such a rare beauty that people in the entertainment industry keep taking chances on her. Often these chances require her to pass insurance required drug and alcohol screens, which is how this current mess got started.

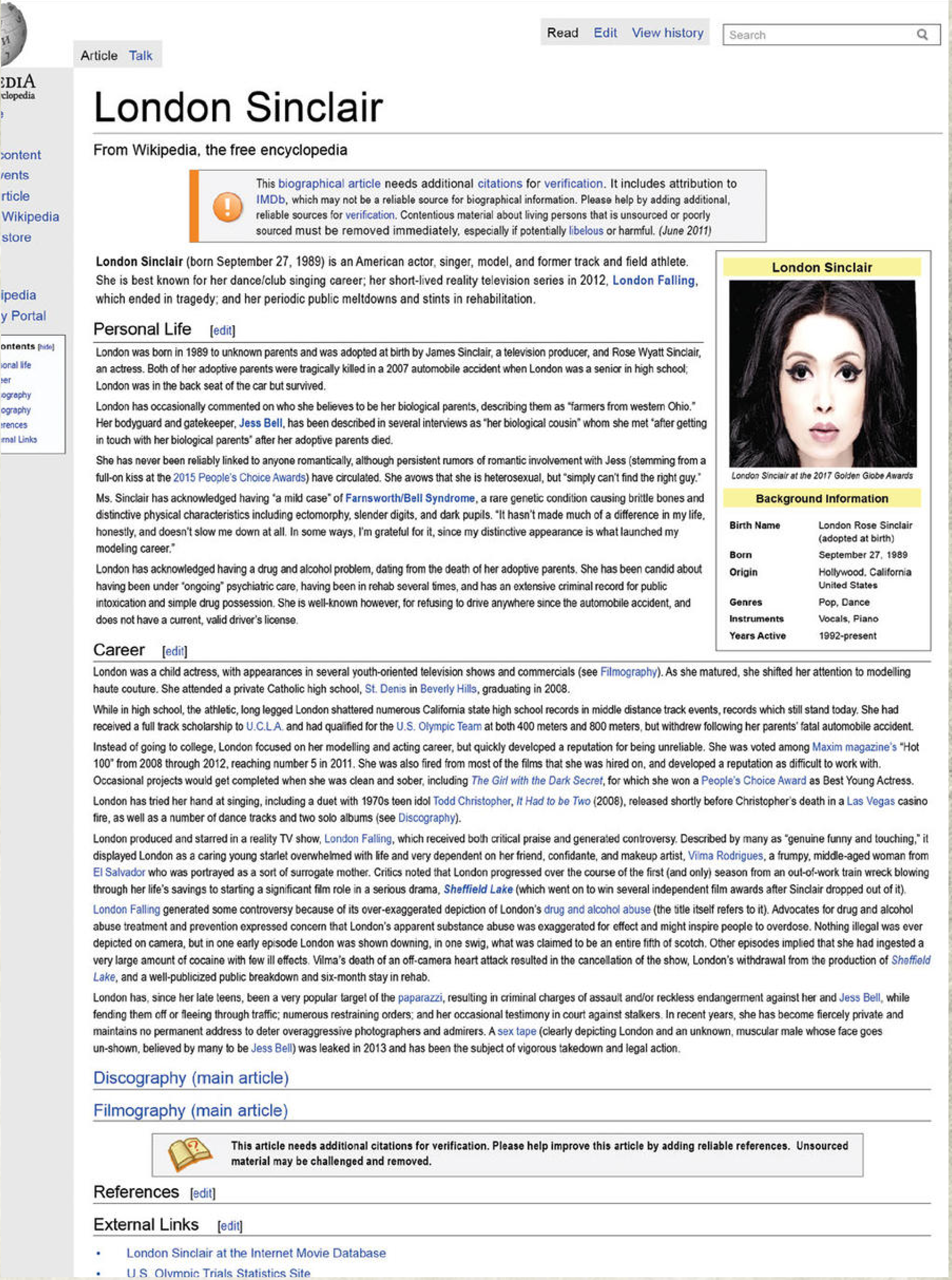
Commonly Known Information

A summary of commonly known information about London Sinclair can be found online, thanks to encyclopedia entries (see *Phlebotomy Investigator's Handout #2* on page 159).

Nasty Rumors

Some kinds of additional research about London Sinclair are available through some amount of digging, bribery, hacking, search warrants (for law enforcement personnel), and/or successful checks against records custodians. The investigators should come away disgusted with how ready most of the police record clerks and/or hospital custodians are to break the law in exchange for sufficient monetary inducement. They should also get the sense that these roads have been walked

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #2



London Sinclair

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

This biographical article needs additional citations for verification. It includes attribution to IMDb, which may not be a reliable source for biographical information. Please help by adding additional, reliable sources for verification. Contentious material about living persons that is unsourced or poorly sourced must be removed immediately, especially if potentially libelous or harmful. *(June 2011)*

London Sinclair (born September 27, 1989) is an American actor, singer, model, and former track and field athlete. She is best known for her dance/club singing career; her short-lived reality television series in 2012, **London Falling**, which ended in tragedy; and her periodic public meltdowns and stints in rehabilitation.

London Sinclair

London Sinclair at the 2017 Golden Globe Awards

Background Information

Birth Name	London Rose Sinclair (adopted at birth)
Born	September 27, 1989
Origin	Hollywood, California United States
Genres	Pop, Dance
Instruments	Vocals, Piano
Years Active	1992-present

Personal Life [edit]

London was born in 1989 to unknown parents and was adopted at birth by James Sinclair, a television producer, and Rose Wyatt Sinclair, an actress. Both of her adoptive parents were tragically killed in a 2007 automobile accident when London was a senior in high school; London was in the back seat of the car but survived.

London has occasionally commented on who she believes to be her biological parents, describing them as "farmers from western Ohio." Her bodyguard and gatekeeper, **Jess Bell**, has been described in several interviews as "her biological cousin" whom she met "after getting in touch with her biological parents" after her adoptive parents died.

She has never been reliably linked to anyone romantically, although persistent rumors of romantic involvement with Jess (stemming from a full-on kiss at the 2015 People's Choice Awards) have circulated. She avows that she is heterosexual, but "simply can't find the right guy."

Ms. Sinclair has acknowledged having "a mild case" of **Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome**, a rare genetic condition causing brittle bones and distinctive physical characteristics including ectomorphy, slender digits, and dark pupils. "It hasn't made much of a difference in my life, honestly, and doesn't slow me down at all. In some ways, I'm grateful for it, since my distinctive appearance is what launched my modeling career."

London has acknowledged having a drug and alcohol problem, dating from the death of her adoptive parents. She has been candid about having been under "ongoing" psychiatric care, having been in rehab several times, and has an extensive criminal record for public intoxication and simple drug possession. She is well-known however, for refusing to drive anywhere since the automobile accident, and does not have a current, valid driver's license.

Career [edit]

London was a child actress, with appearances in several youth-oriented television shows and commercials (see Filmography). As she matured, she shifted her attention to modelling haute couture. She attended a private Catholic high school, St. Denis in Beverly Hills, graduating in 2008.

While in high school, the athletic, long legged London shattered numerous California state high school records in middle distance track events, records which still stand today. She had received a full track scholarship to U.C.L.A. and had qualified for the U.S. Olympic Team at both 400 meters and 800 meters, but withdrew following her parents' fatal automobile accident.

Instead of going to college, London focused on her modelling and acting career, but quickly developed a reputation for being unreliable. She was voted among Maxim magazine's "Hot 100" from 2008 through 2012, reaching number 5 in 2011. She was also fired from most of the films that she was hired on, and developed a reputation as difficult to work with. Occasional projects would get completed when she was clean and sober, including *The Girl with the Dark Secret*, for which she won a People's Choice Award as Best Young Actress.

London has tried her hand at singing, including a duet with 1970s teen idol Todd Christopher, *It Had to be Two* (2008), released shortly before Christopher's death in a Las Vegas casino fire, as well as a number of dance tracks and two solo albums (see Discography).

London produced and starred in a reality TV show, London Falling, which received both critical praise and generated controversy. Described by many as "genuine funny and touching," it displayed London as a caring young starlet overwhelmed with life and very dependent on her friend, confidante, and makeup artist, Vilma Rodrigues, a frumpy, middle-aged woman from El Salvador who was portrayed as a sort of surrogate mother. Critics noted that London progressed over the course of the first (and only) season from an out-of-work train wreck blowing through her life's savings to starting a significant film role in a serious drama, ***Sheffield Lake*** (which went on to win several independent film awards after Sinclair dropped out of it).

London Falling generated some controversy because of its over-exaggerated depiction of London's drug and alcohol abuse (the title itself refers to it). Advocates for drug and alcohol abuse treatment and prevention expressed concern that London's apparent substance abuse was exaggerated for effect and might inspire people to overdose. Nothing illegal was ever depicted on camera, but in one early episode London was shown downing, in one swig, what was claimed to be an entire fifth of scotch. Other episodes implied that she had ingested a very large amount of cocaine with few ill effects. Vilma's death of an off-camera heart attack resulted in the cancellation of the show, London's withdrawal from the production of *Sheffield Lake*, and a well-publicized public breakdown and six-month stay in rehab.

London has, since her late teens, been a very popular target of the paparazzi, resulting in criminal charges of assault and/or reckless endangerment against her and Jess Bell, while fending them off or fleeing through traffic; numerous restraining orders; and her occasional testimony in court against stalkers. In recent years, she has become fiercely private and maintains no permanent address to deter overaggressive photographers and admirers. A sex tape (clearly depicting London and an unknown, muscular male whose face goes un-shown, believed by many to be Jess Bell) was leaked in 2013 and has been the subject of vigorous takedown and legal action.

Discography (main article)

Filmography (main article)

This article needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding reliable references. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.

References [edit]

External Links [edit]

- London Sinclair at the Internet Movie Database
- U.S. Olympic Trials Statistics Site

before by tabloid journalists; someone might hold out for more of a bribe commenting, "the last guy gave me $10,000, without complaining about it." Descriptions of flagrant bribers meet the description of Jules Thomas, a "little, reedy blond twerp that kind of looked like a younger David Spade"; the Wuxie Pharma investigators are more careful about getting their information.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

It has been reliably reported, both in tabloid journalism and in mainstream journalism, that London has been in and out of drug rehab and psychiatric care since she initially suffered some kind of breakdown during her junior year in high school. She recovered, but then suffered through surviving a fatal under-ride car crash that killed her parents, which prompted another stay in rehab. She has run through many of the most prominent and expensive clinics, and it is not hard to construct a timeline.

Ordinary research fails to uncover, however, where she went as a juvenile, or who the treating physician was. This information is not reported in the mainstream or tabloid media. A successful **Library Use** check, or the response to a search warrant, in fact, reveals that the records that should exist somewhere (e.g., medical insurance billing records) have gone missing.

It should take some effort for either law enforcement or persistent investigators focused on the health insurance company to get to the bottom of things. Law enforcement needs to get a search warrant for the company's Los Angeles premises (strangely resisted by the company BlueFlag's lawyers until they are threatened with obstruction or their heads are gone over). Hacking in to the company's document retention servers requires an Extreme **Computer Use** check (Hard if attempted from within BlueFlag's offices) or someone on the inside assisting. Success reveals that the records were deliberately deleted, the day before the search warrant, by someone using the head of BlueFlag's legal department, Peter Loughlin's, administrative login. Peter Loughlin, a sixty-year old lawyer with severe gambling debts, accepted a $1,000,000 bribe to provide the name of the referring physician to "a middle-aged white woman who did not provide her name and paid in cash" at a nearby Starbucks. (This was Lori, Wuxie Pharma's second agent and muscle). Loughlin can be found at his condo in Los Angeles, hurriedly packing to leave the county (or possibly at the LAX airport, about to board a flight to Brazil).

If successfully **Intimidated**, physically roughed up, or eventually once the legal process plays out and his own attorney tells him to take the last plea bargain offered, or after he has sat in jail for about 12 hours, Loughlin gives up the name of the referring physician from when London was a teenager: Dr. Hans Clek, a Jungian dream analyst affiliated with UCLA If the investigators pursue this line of inquiry and get the information out of Loughlin quickly (Intimidation or beating it out of him), they should get to Dr. Clek's office (see below) just in time to possibly save him. Otherwise, they are not in time to save him, but possibly in time to see the aftermath and give chase to Lori Brown.

Criminal History

Readily available in the case of legitimate law enforcement requests, others will have to hack in to non-public FBI databases or sealed court files to get the juicy stuff. She has a long, long list of drug and alcohol related offenses (possession, possession of large amounts, disorderly conduct, etc.) as well as numerous probation violations. She also has a few "acting out" shoplifting offenses over the years; the police reports inevitably describe her as seeming intoxicated. She often blames these on mistakes or miscommunications ("the shop clerk wanted me to wear it"). While the facts of the convictions are public, her lawyers have had uncanny success at getting the details of the offenses sealed. Of course, the broad details of these incidents were the subject of tabloid reports.

The juicy stuff involves the actual drug and alcohol test results. They are incredibly high (e.g., .50 BAC), which should have rendered someone comatose or dead, as opposed to drunk and disorderly. She has no convictions for driving under the influence as she does not drive.

London's Boyfriends?

There are plenty of rumors about people London has dated, all male. None of them turn out to be true. Some of the alleged past boyfriends were genuinely interested but could not get her to reciprocate. Others who know her a bit (e.g., co-stars, backup singers, etc.) believe that she is quietly dating Jess Bell, her cousin, which most find squicky, but she doesn't admit to it.

An example of such an acquaintance or co-star who actually has some information is George "G-Rex" Shields, a modestly successful hip-hop artist. Although he affects a tough guy attitude, a **Persuade** roll from a seemingly well-meaning member of law enforcement convinces G-Rex that they are trying to help London and gets him to cooperate off the record (and somewhere where he is convinced no one is watching or recording—e.g., a beach). He collaborated with her on one of her dance tracks and they hit it off, but he has not talked to her since then (about five years). According to G-Rex, they were together for about two months, but broke up when "they couldn't get on the same page about physicality—she doesn't like to be touched." He tried to stay friends with her, but he gave up after her cousin Jess kept interfering and finally, threatened to kill G-Rex.

At least, he thought that she didn't like sex, until her sex tape came out a year later. G-Rex still has her cell phone number—something very few people do—but will only give it to law enforcement on a second, Hard **Persuade** check or a **Fast Talk** check.

The Sex Tape

The subject of vigorous take-down actions, this notorious bit of footage still exists on hard drives here and there. The ones that have publicly circulated are about 30 seconds long and show someone who is obviously London, naked, engage in sex acts with a blurred-out figure, and there is no audio. The version that Frank Phelps has is a little more involved and has audio. See the nearby box. **SAN** loss for seeing the unexpurgated sex tape is 0/1, and a **Cthulhu Mythos** roll realizes that the mumbling and groaning engaged in by the male is a fertility chant to a being known as "He Who Walks Behind The Rows." Those who have met Jess Bell and who succeed in an **INT** check identify him as the male in the video from his voice and general appearance after seeing the full version.

A Particularly Nasty Rumor from High School, Junior Year (The Other Prior Incident)

Law enforcement digging deep into London's background, and who specifically ask for any law enforcement files relating to "mysteriously exploded people," find a closed investigation file at the Los Angeles Police Department, dating ten years ago on a successful Hard **Library Use** check (reduced to standard if they specifically look in Los Angeles, and awarding a bonus die if they look for people connected to London Sinclair). See *Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #4*, on page 162, which can be obtained either through a public records request to the LAPD, or from the CDC by a specific law enforcement request. The investigating detective, Tom Barclay, is still on the job at the LAPD

PHLEBOTOMY INVESTIGATOR HANDOUT #3

A SYNOPSIS OF THE SEX TAPE (FULL VERSION)

This is a 3-minute-long film depicting London Sinclair (fully nude and apparently extremely intoxicated) engaged in a series of sex acts with a tall, muscular male whose face is blurred out. London is actively engaged but seems bored by the whole thing. London is checking her pink, glitter covered cell phone intermittently. The man is muttering something in a deep, guttural, sing-song, unintelligible language. There is something extremely unsettling about the sounds being made by the male. At the end of the tape, London says, "Hey, !@$^(*, I don't know what all that stupid jibber-jabber is, but if you don't knock that @#$% off, you're done."

Again with the CDC

Sgt. Barclay is now Lt. Barclay, but still with the Los Angeles Police Dept.'s homicide unit. Since this is a closed case, he will talk about it in response to any reasonable request. He still has no explanation for what he found, but it haunts him to this day. By the time he got there, the poor kid was literally splashed all over the bedroom. He interviewed his girlfriend, London Sinclair ("you know, the train wreck celebrity—she was really broken up"). She admitted that she had been at James' house and in his bedroom "hanging out" that day, but obviously, she did not cause him to explode all over the floor, walls and ceiling, right? The CDC told him about some "genetic anomalies" in the sample he sent, but they had no idea what happened, either. He is obviously interested, and willing to share information, if contacted by a fellow law enforcement agent investigating "another incident in Cleveland." (The details about the phlebotomy lab are not made public at a level where he can make any connection.) He's also willing to talk with private informants who suggest a connection, although he is more circumspect with such persons.

The CDC, if contacted by law enforcement, maintained a sample of the mess from James Chang's bedroom. If compared to the mess from the phlebotomy lab, it is identical: the mutations to the DNA match.

James Chang's Friends and Family

Looking up people from St. Denis high school that year (roughly ten years ago) can confirm that James Chang and London Sinclair were boyfriend and girlfriend that year, and "really tight friends on top of it." The St. Denis yearbook has a picture of them attending prom together, and also together at a high school track meet (London cheering James on from the sideline).

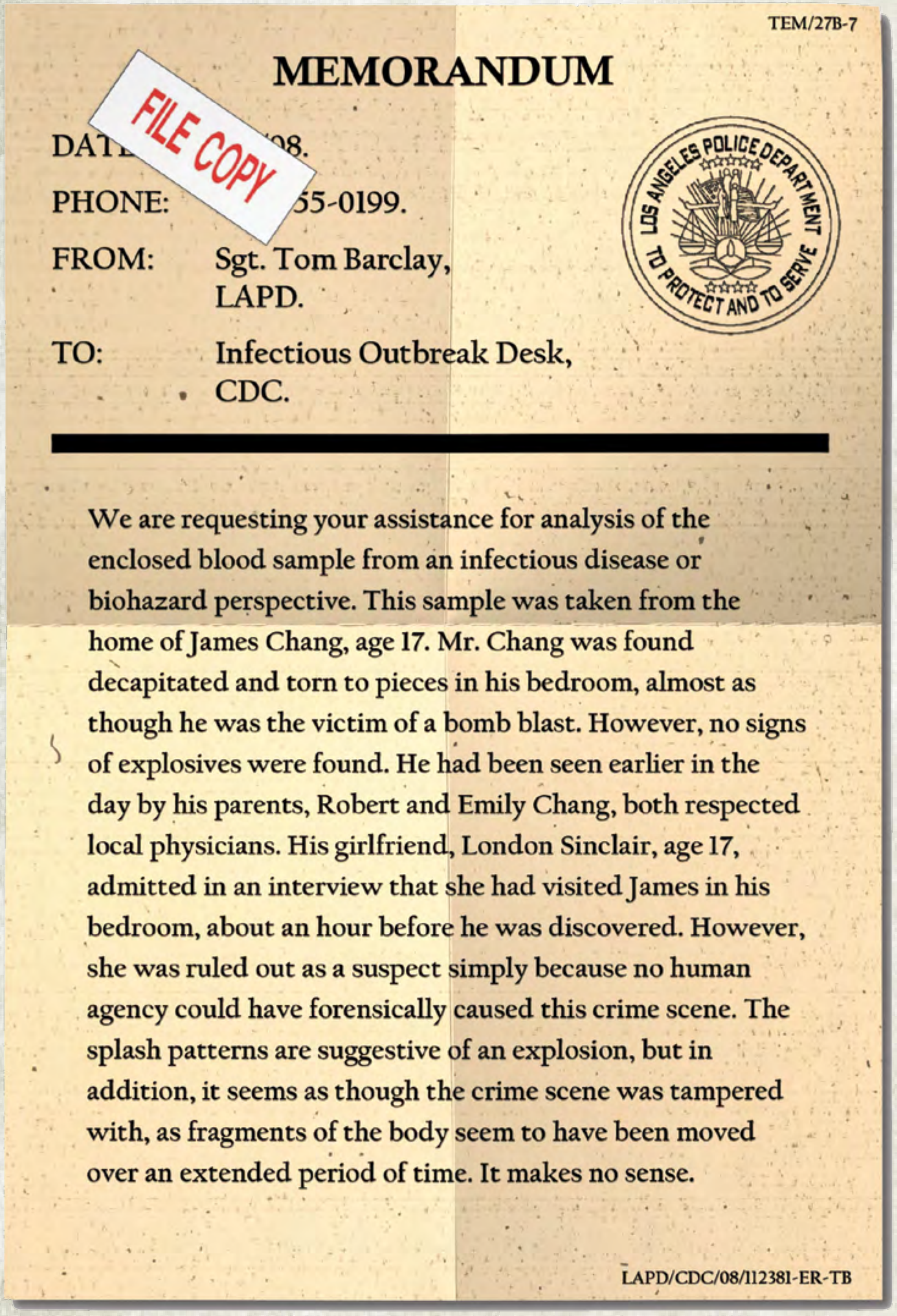
Drs. Robert and Emily Chang no longer live at that house, and are very, very careful to keep all evidence of their involvement with Wuxie Pharma out of their current house, off their phones and computers (for the most part), and out of their offices. They use separate laptops that they keep, along with records, James' personal belongings, and a "stalker's wall" of photographs of London Sinclair, along with illegal automatic firearms, a vat of sulfuric acid, biohazard suits, and a long-missing stolen car to use as transportation, in a storage unit an hour east of Los Angeles.

They are uncooperative with either law enforcement requests for interviews or media requests. There is little basis to obtain a search warrant, and they have excellent lawyers to make this point to a reviewing judge if one should happen to be obtained. Their reticence to talk speaks volumes in and of itself, however.

In order to get any information out of them at all, someone will have to either succeed in an Extreme Intimidation check (or beat it out of them), or burglarize their home while they are away. Burglary requires a Hard **Computer Use** check to bypass their security alarms (failure results in the police arriving in 12 minutes). Once inside, burglars find only two things of note (beside an odd absence of any memorabilia relating to their late son James—not even family photos, which are all at the storage unit). On a successful **Accounting** check while pouring over monthly bank statements, they find recurring payments to "Desert U-Store-Em" for the storage unit (a bonus die can be awarded if they are specifically looking for properties where evidence might be stashed). Also, on a second **Accounting** check (a bonus die can again be awarded if they are specifically looking at the time period around the Cleveland phlebotomy lab incident), they can find a call from Emily's cell phone number to Wuxie Pharma's number.

If confronted and finally brought to task, the Changs might be inclined to talk on a Hard **Persuade** check, again with a bonus die if they are convinced that the people they are talking to understand that London Sinclair "murdered" their son and is some kind of "monster." They do not understand the Mythos, know nothing of the Patriarch and his machinations, nor are they aware of the horrible details of how London's parents died—they honestly were not involved in that. They also honestly do not know who Wuxie Pharma has on London's tail, nor how they intend to bring her down (hence, they do not know about the Ferguson Clinic plan or Dr. Clek). However, they are convinced that London is some kind of "alien," as crazy as that sounds, and want to either bring her to justice or kill her to protect the planet. Roleplay out any further involvement with the Changs; if the investigators decide to liquidate London, they may prove unlikely allies.

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #4



TEM/27B-7

MEMORANDUM

FILE COPY

DAT[illegible]08.

PHONE: [illegible]55-0199.

FROM: Sgt. Tom Barclay,
LAPD.

TO: Infectious Outbreak Desk,
CDC.

We are requesting your assistance for analysis of the enclosed blood sample from an infectious disease or biohazard perspective. This sample was taken from the home of James Chang, age 17. Mr. Chang was found decapitated and torn to pieces in his bedroom, almost as though he was the victim of a bomb blast. However, no signs of explosives were found. He had been seen earlier in the day by his parents, Robert and Emily Chang, both respected local physicians. His girlfriend, London Sinclair, age 17, admitted in an interview that she had visited James in his bedroom, about an hour before he was discovered. However, she was ruled out as a suspect simply because no human agency could have forensically caused this crime scene. The splash patterns are suggestive of an explosion, but in addition, it seems as though the crime scene was tampered with, as fragments of the body seem to have been moved over an extended period of time. It makes no sense.

LAPD/CDC/08/112381-ER-TB

Another Particularly Nasty Rumor from High School, Senior Year

Even if approached by law enforcement, Sgt. Barclay will not voluntarily bring up the subject of a second criminal investigation, unless he logically sees a reason to do so. That is because it is an open investigation: the murder of the Sinclairs and the attempted murder of London herself, in the spring of her senior year.

The traffic accident report part of the file is a public record, but requests for the rest are refused to anyone without a very convincing, law enforcement related reason for the request. It is an ongoing investigation, led by (again) now Lt. Barclay. The traffic accident report simply notes the names and addresses of those involved (Bo Johnson and the Sinclairs), and describes what happened: Vehicle 1 (Johnson) was stopped at a light; Vehicle 2 failed to stop coming up behind it and under-rode the trailer, causing two instant fatalities (the Sinclair parents) and some broken bones and contusions to the backseat passenger, London.

It is an open investigation because of two things not in the accident report. First, the Sinclairs' brakes were found to have been tampered with and they never got to the bottom of who did it. Second, they don't think it was an accident. The truck that was under-ridden had been blocked by a pickup truck that seemed to be stalled, but left right after the accident. Lt. Barclay (correctly) suspects that something is rotten in Denmark, and he is right. ***Keeper's Note:*** *this was Jess Bell, acting on the instructions of the Patriarch, to "put London back on her path to fame and fortune."*

Deep Research/The Truck Driver

Bo Johnson, the truck driver, can be tracked down by anyone who has seen the accident report; he still lives at the same address in Henderson, NV. He was minding his own business, driving a load of enormous steel coils on a flatbed truck from Missouri to a warehouse in suburban Los Angeles. He was stopped at a stoplight and got ran into from behind by a car. He didn't hear any brakes being applied, and got out of his cab to see if he could help. He called 911 when he saw what had happened—the Mercedes convertible (with its top down) had under-ridden his truck. It was a bloody mess, the folks in the front seat had been decapitated and (this is exactly what he says) "I don't know how that pretty girl in the back seat managed to survive that."

A **Psychology** check indicates that Mr. Johnson is holding something back. If this is suggested to him, he looks visibly ill and starts shaking. The truth (as might be ascertained from talking to his wife, Sue) is that he spent three months in a mental health wing after the accident, suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and "delusions." A successful Hard **Persuade** or straight **Psychoanalysis** roll gets Mr. Johnson to defensively and apologetically repeat the "delusion" that he was "cured" from: there were three heads on the pavement, and the body of the young girl in the back seat crawled out from under his truck and stuck her head back on to her neck before the paramedics arrived. "But they convinced me that was just my imagination, all the blood was playing tricks on my mind. Right?"

If asked, he does mention that a pickup truck stalled at the intersection in front of him, but it disappeared after the accident. If specifically asked, the stalled-out truck did indeed have Ohio plates; the police didn't ask him at the time. How did they know?

PHLEBOTOMY INVESTIGATOR HANDOUT #5

A SYNOPSIS OF LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE ABOUT SURVIVING WITHOUT ONE'S HEAD

There are numerous legends about cephalophores—people able to carry their own heads around after they are decapitated, or who seem none the worse for wear afterwards. Often, they are saints (like St. Denis) or musically inclined heroes (like Orpheus). They are also a part of Celtic mythology (replicated in the tale of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight). Examples include:

- The Green Knight, whose head is struck from his shoulders but who is not bothered by it in the least, returning a year and a day later to return the blow.
- Saint Denis, the patron saint of Paris, who after his martyrdom by beheading, picked up his head and walked two miles to Montmartre, to where he wanted to be buried. Similar stories appertain to Saint Aphrodisius of Béziers (whose head jumped out of a well and rolled back to his body), and Saint Nicasius of Rheims, Saint Just, Saint Ginés de la Jara, Saint Firmin, Saint Minias, the siblings Saints Felix and Regula, Saint Exuperantius, Saint Valerie, Saints Maxien, Lucien, and Julian, Saint Cheron and Saint Osyth, and Saint Paul of Tarsus. The Golden Legend of St. Paul claims that at his execution, "[a]s soon as his head bounded from his body, it intoned, in Hebrew and in a clear voice, 'Jesus Christ.'"

Aristotle goes on for some length (for some unstated reason) to discredit the idea that a severed head could survive or talk. The singing, disembodied head of Orpheus was a familiar tale in Greek myth.

The Walking Head?

If they get the truck driver's side of the story, this may prompt the investigators into doing some focused research on things that can operate without, and/or reattach, their heads. General folklore about the headless (known on an **Occult** check or findable on a **Library Use** check) is nearby; the results of a successful **Cthulhu Mythos** research check can be found in *Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #6* (p. 164).

Adoption Records for London Sinclair

No adoption agency has any records of London Sinclair's adoption. There is a record of the adoption at the Los Angeles County courthouse on microfilm. The Sinclairs were not represented by an attorney; it is simply referred to as a private adoption of an unnamed female infant. This (**Law** roll) indicates a privately arranged adoption with the consent of known parents. There is a consent to adoption on file but it is sealed. Unsealing it (on request by law enforcement, or via bribery or stealth otherwise) leads to the names of the parents: James Farnsworth (alleged age 50) and Maria Farnsworth, a minor (age 16), each of Ohio (no address given). (Keeper's Information: James Farnsworth is the Patriarch and Maria is one of his daughters; both can be found at the Darke County complex, depending on whether you have run "Separation Anxiety" and how it turned out.) Indeed, researching Ohio birth records can find (incongruously) a birth certificate for Maria Farnsworth from 43 years ago, again listing her father as (doubtlessly another) James Farnsworth (still supposedly 50) and Sarah Bell (age 23).

On the Set with London Sinclair, Sheffield Lake

The director of *Sheffield Lake*, Robert Palmer, is a well-regarded and polite indie film director on the rise. Research into London Sinclair's discontinued work on the film *Sheffield Lake*, referenced in her wiki entry, might (successful **Library Use** check) turn up an unusually gracious comment by Mr. Palmer about London, to the effect that she is a nice young woman and that he hopes she finds peace. He will cooperate with law enforcement requests for an interview, or with anyone who seems generally interested in London's well-being (successful **Persuade** check).

Palmer genuinely likes London, and while he admits that she clearly had substance abuse problems before his film, she was on her absolute best behavior on his film set. He describes her as "eager to please and succeed, a good but not great actress, but very beautiful and marketable. She has this fragile quality to her when she is clean and sober—lady's been through a lot with losing her parents at 18, you know." Her friend and confidante Vilma was critical to her sobriety, and her death sent London completely off the deep end. He gave her one last chance and insisted that she go to therapy, but she showed up obviously drunk out of her mind afterwards, and he had to fire her for insurance and scheduling reasons. He'd like to help her, but she hasn't returned his calls. Again, he also has her cell phone number and will give it out to law enforcement or anyone who seems genuinely interested in her well-being (on an Extreme **Persuade** check or **Fast Talk** check). Mr. Palmer (if asked) also knows the name of the mental health professional she saw immediately after Vilma died, a Dr. Clek in Los Angeles. This wasn't one of the usual celebrity headshrinkers; she said something once about how he was the only one who knew anything.

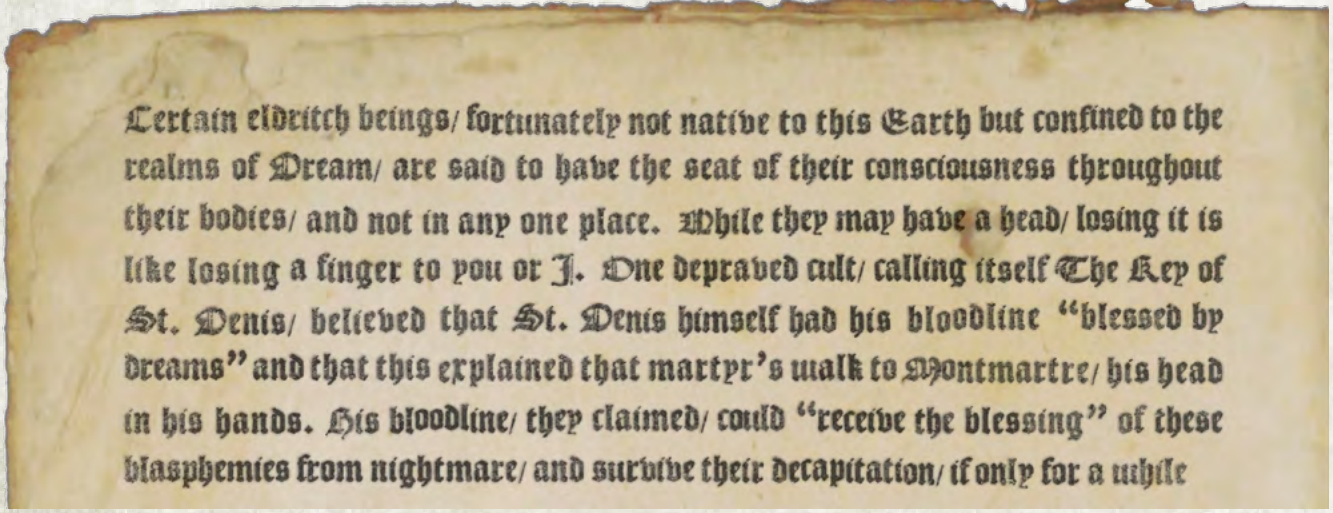
By contrast, he has no use for that jackass she hangs out with, Jess: "It's some kind of weird, unhealthy dynamic. It's like he's sworn on his life to let her do whatever she wants, and he doesn't really take care of her. He just keeps well-meaning people away, and beats up paparazzi."

What the Paparazzi have to Say/ Interview, Jules Thomas

The Hollywood paparazzi are (this time and for the most part) innocent of the (worst of the) harassment of London Sinclair over the years. They definitely deny knowing anything about how the sex tape was procured or anything for certain about the video footage of London shaking her stung fingers in her limo. However, if they decide to cooperate with the questioners (a Hard **Charm**, **Intimidate**, or **Fast Talk** check, a sizable bribe, or making an existing criminal problem go away), they all have the same idea about who probably did both of those jobs: Jules Thomas, a freelance stringer for the Global News Service (GNS).

GNS, they can tell you, is a small news bureau that pays top dollar for really salacious celebrity news, and they are always interested in buying pieces on London Sinclair. They have even paid for lawyers to mitigate the consequences of certain bendings of the law for really good stuff. Jules is a "tech wizard" with hidden cameras and parabolic microphones, the kind of guy who can turn your alarm clock into a hidden camera and you would never know. It's just rumor and

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #6



Certain eldritch beings/ fortunately not native to this Earth but confined to the realms of Dream/ are said to have the seat of their consciousness throughout their bodies/ and not in any one place. While they may have a head/ losing it is like losing a finger to you or I. One depraved cult/ calling itself The Key of St. Denis/ believed that St. Denis himself had his bloodline "blessed by dreams" and that this explained that martyr's walk to Montmartre/ his head in his hands. His bloodline/ they claimed/ could "receive the blessing" of these blasphemies from nightmare/ and survive their decapitation/ if only for a while educated guesswork, but the things about London Sinclair that took real work to get were probably him. He lives in Las Vegas but has been seen in Los Angeles lately, openly trying to find London Sinclair. Jules has openly told several people that he believes that London was at the Cleveland phlebotomy lab disaster and GNS, will pay big money for proof.

Jules Thomas is not too hard to find. Although London has not been seen at her Beverly Hills address since the Cleveland phlebotomy lab incident, and is in hiding, he is staking it out almost 24/7, hoping that someone will happen by that he can follow from a distance. So far he has had no such luck. Driving around the neighborhood long enough finds him about a mile away, parked on a Vespa in some woods on high ground, watching through a telephoto lens and listening with a parabolic microphone. He may make a half-hearted effort to flee, but is fundamentally a non-combatant and a coward, so he should be brought to heel fairly easily. That, and he's been severely beaten up recently, he has a black eye, a broken nose, and is noticeably limping.

Award a bonus die to any effort to **Intimidate** him and impose a penalty die to any effort to reason with him or appeal to him as a human being. Plausible requests from law enforcement that they will let him go if he answers their questions should be allowed to succeed after a little shirt-collaring or arm-twisting; however, he will not, under any circumstances, discuss his employer.

- He honestly does not know why GNS wants him to stay constantly after London Sinclair. They just pay really well for it; someone is interested in paying top dollar. He does not know who.

- He is responsible for both the surreptitious recording of the sex tape (using that dummy, Jess Bell's, cell phone as a zombie device) and the limo footage (using a wirecam hidden in the back seat).

- He was paid $1M in cash by some guy who would not give his name for both his copy of the unexpurgated sex tape as well as the wire cam footage. He can identify a photo of Frank Phelps as the guy who paid him. He struck him as some kind of private investigator with an employer who was trying to get dirt on London Sinclair. The wirecam footage is something that he has been keeping as "insurance," although Jess Bell and London Sinclair both know that he has it, somehow.

- As a bonus, he threw in to that deal a shirt that London had spat on a while back. He was going to sue her, but the guy agreed to his $1M price when he mentioned it, with no further dickering.

- Depending on how things go, Jules might get curious and ask the investigators why they are asking him all of these questions. Their response can have a major impact on the investigation. If they decide to make a deal with him and tell Jules what they know, including things that sound kind of weird, he gets quiet and pensive. "Tell you what," he says. "Don't arrest me and stay out of my way, and I'll share something with you. You're going to find out anyway, and you've told me enough to tell me where I need to be, but it might work out best for both of us if you get there sooner rather than later. Screw me and everything embarrassing that you do for the rest of your life will be in the tabloids." If they decide to trust him, Jules tells them something few people know. "If London's scared—I mean, really scared—she won't go to any of her usual posse of doctors and lawyers. When she broke down after Vilma died, I managed to track her—don't ask how—to a therapist at UCLA named Clek. I think he saw her after her parents were killed. He's the one guy she really trusts. Meet you there I guess."

- As to how he got beaten up, he declines comment unless he has disclosed the Clek information. If the investigators are cooperating with him, he tells them what happened yesterday. He was paid a visit by "this lunch lady looking woman," while staking out London's house from a closer spot. She was so unassuming that she didn't even register as a threat, but that "lady knows Kung Fu or something and she was hard." All that she wanted to know is if he had any leads on where London was, and she took his camera (and a backup, and another backup). She didn't get much though. She left and told him to "keep up the good work on London, and watch the news." ***Keeper's Note:*** *this was Lori Brown, who already knows about Clek but was checking in to see if Jules knew where London herself was.*

London by Gaslight/ Overview of Events Up Until London Flees to Rehab

Once word of the Cleveland phlebotomy lab massacre gets out and Frank Phelps confirms that London Sinclair was there, the Changs put their plan into motion. They are aware of the rehab facility in which she has the most confidence, The Ferguson Clinic. This is the place that she goes when she doesn't want the fact that she's in rehab publicized. In the past few years, with the help of Frank Phelps and Lori Brown, they have managed to get some compromising information on the clinic's owner, Dr. Adam Ferguson. They hacked into his personal laptop, hoping to find some evidence of prescription drug irregularities or health insurance billing fraud. What they found was far worse—damning evidence of his participation in a "torture for fun" ring. He is a sadist and a serial killer who liked to watch his greatest hits on poorly secured video.

Lori was assigned to have that particular conversation with Dr. Ferguson. If, when the time came, he arranged for London Sinclair to have a fatal accident, his prior indiscretions would never be brought up again. (In fact, if he wanted to, he could give her to his friends to vivisect.) They would like several biological samples if possible. If he did not cooperate, well, Texas actually executes people. Dr. Ferguson has decided to cooperate, since he does not know how many people he is up against. Besides, he never did like London.

London is having a major depressive episode and general freak out over what happened at the phlebotomy lab. She tried (in half-assed fashion) to prevent it, while still keeping whoever that guy was who was following her from "getting in her business." She has accidentally killed yet another person and she is genuinely upset. She has been in hiding, moving from fleabag motel to fleabag motel and getting drunk and stoned, while she figures out what to do. She is off the grid. Her cell phone is off and Jess Bell is good at spotting tails. He also moves her frequently to prevent people from getting a lock on her.

Frank and Lori want to put the pressure on her to freak out enough that she goes to the therapist and rehab facility that she trusts. Lori paid off the lawyer at BlueFlag to find out who the therapist is, Dr. Clek.

While the investigators dig into the story, Frank and Lori want to gaslight London into going to rehab. They do not know where she is, and it's not like she will listen to them. So they want to gaslight her—terrorize her until she sends herself to rehab. They do this in a number of ways:

- They look for her themselves. They do not want to actually catch her or confront her, they want her to feel hunted. If they get a lead on a possible location for her, Frank calls in cat's paws—tabloid journalists, or the investigators—to look into it. If Frank can get the investigators thinking that he is a fellow "monster hunter," they are perfect cat's paws, since they will view his feeding bread crumbs to them as valuable leads. By way of example, if the investigators are in L.A., Frank might call them from Cleveland and tell them about a rumor that London was spotted at the Starlight Motel in Hollywood. She will have just checked out, but paparazzi will be there as well, having heard the same rumor. The point of this is to make London feel hunted and add to her stress.

- If the investigators seem highly competent and determined—to the point where they might actually find and confront London—Lori tips off Jess Bell anonymously. Jess doesn't question the source of the help, he just gets London moving again.

- Frank bribes the media to run stories about London and keep her media profile high, again to make her feel hunted.

- Lori might expose someone to a biological sample from London, at somewhere London has been rumored to have been seen, or made a narrow escape from. For example, a chambermaid at the aforementioned Starlight Motel might be ambushed by Lori and stabbed with a tainted syringe—just in time for the investigators to find, and have to deal with, the Pieces that remain.

- Finally, when you decide that it is time to advance the action, or when the investigators uncover the identity of Dr. Clek and head toward his office, Lori puts the final stage of the gaslighting plan into place: a direct attack on Dr. Clek.

Whether Dr. Clek lives or dies, the incident is reported on the local news and in the tabloid press (which is tipped off by Frank that London is supposedly at his office). She isn't (she is far too freaked out to actually go to his office, which the investigators may realize on a Hard **INT** check). But the plan is to undermine her psychological stability enough to force her into rehab at her safest place, and the attempt on Dr. Clek succeeds in this goal.

TRACK MARKS

Dr. Clek is the same Jungian therapist as is featured in "**The Focus Group**." He is in the same office, and it is possible that (if you have not yet run "**The Focus Group**") his office is being set up for game testing.

Lori Brown and the End of Dr. Clek?

Lori Brown, having learned about Dr. Clek, and not having anything resembling a conscience, decides to shove London over the edge by killing Dr. Clek and making it look like London was responsible. Whether she succeeds or fails, it works, and London immediately flees for the Ferguson Clinic. Frank is not present; while he was generally on board with the idea of harassing Dr. Clek to pressure London Sinclair, he is not on board with killing him and does not know the details of what Lori intends. (If he is partnered up with the investigators and accompanying them, in fact, he will be genuinely surprised, and he and Lori have a violent falling out on the spot.) Assume that Clek works odd hours as a sleep therapist, so he and his receptionist are there whenever Lori shows up.

There are two possible ways to stage the incident at Dr. Clek's office. If the investigators have done, in the estimation of the Keeper, an admirable job of investigating and acted quickly to obtain Dr. Clek's name (e.g., beating it out of Loughlin, extracting it from Jules Thomas, or coming up with a clever way of getting it otherwise), you might allow them to arrive just in the nick of time. Lori will just have shot Dr. Clek's receptionist (**Listen** check for a silenced gunshot, encouraging them to hurry the rest of the way down the hall) and Clek will have fled for his conference room and locked the door behind himself. If so, they have a chance to stop Lori. Note that Lori, despite her appearances, is a serious, ruthless, unflappable badass and won't hesitate to kill anyone that she needs to in order to escape. If interrupted by the investigators, she will try to escape, and will not hesitate to inject an investigator. It would require an Extreme **Luck** roll with a penalty die for an investigator to survive an injection with London's DNA, in which case, they have an unknown bit of Farnsworth/Bell ancestry themselves. Others are killed instantly and devolve into Pieces (use the same stats for six Pieces as at the phlebotomy lab; they remain active for five minutes).

Lori is unfazed by the sight of the Pieces (or much of anything) and likely escapes if such a distraction succeeds. Having done her job, Lori goes underground; Frank would then likewise become scarce once he makes sure that the investigators and paparazzi are tipped off, if necessary, to London's likely whereabouts (The Ferguson Clinic) following her arrival.

Lori generally fights to the death or tries to escape even at risk of death, but it is possible that she might be captured and interrogated. If so, she is the one person who knows everything, including that The Ferguson Clinic is a trap and that Dr. Ferguson is in on the plot. She cares nothing for her own life, but might break under torture or hypnotic medication. Likewise, her smart phone, once cracked (Hard **Computer Use** check) contains enough emails summarizing the entire plot, including Frank and Dr. Ferguson's involvement, the involvement of Wuxie Pharma and an idea to use the investigators as patsies for the death.

Alternatively, they might arrive just a little too late. Clek will have devolved into six Pieces (again, use the same stats), which when the investigators arrive will be active for 1D6-1 minutes longer. Clek's burst-off head seems to be trying to get their attention and say something. If questioned, Clek's head can croak out a hint: "1792…help…her" (**SAN** loss for questioning a dying head is 1D4 on top of other **SAN** losses for seeing a bloody mess of writhing, mutating body parts).

If he survives, Dr. Hans Clek is a thin, bald gentleman, very proper and polite, with a hint of a Dutch accent, a Jungian therapist specializing in sleep disorders and dream analysis. If he survives, Dr. Clek is extremely grateful, but will not divulge patient confidences, except to law enforcement and then only to the extent necessary to prevent an imminent threat of violence. He will need to be **Persuaded** to do so, in which case, he will inform law enforcement (only) that he has reason to believe that London Sinclair is at or will soon be at The Ferguson Clinic in eastern Texas. He may call her on their behalf (leaving a message) and urge her to cooperate with them to keep her safe from a threat to her well-being—if he is convinced that one exists.

If he doesn't, the players have 14 minutes to snoop before the police arrive (someone will have heard the chaos and/or muffled gunshot and called the police). This is enough time to download a copy of London's therapy file, if they have her patient number (1792), or succeed in a **Computer Use** check to sift through them quickly. Searching for "Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome" or other loaded terms will also find the right file quickly.

If he is killed and/or the investigators take advantage of the chaos to do some surreptitious snooping (successful **Stealth** check to go unnoticed), Dr. Clek was logged in to his computer at the time all hell broke loose. His patient files are kept by number and not by name (although billing records are by name). The juicy information is kept on his computer in patient 1792's file. Excerpts appear nearby in *Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #7*. London's cell phone number is included in her patient file. The notes actually begin when she is a small child (age 5) and the most recent note is dated earlier that day. There are hundreds of session notes; what follows are representative samples. Reviewing the entire file requires 8 hours, costs 1 **SAN**, and awards +1 to Dream Lore.

If Lori is captured or killed, law enforcement investigators can find out her background as a former U.S. counterintelligence operative (real name: Florence Knight). If they think to check into known associates of Ms. Knight from her counterintelligence days, they likewise discover Frank's real identity (Francis Mulholland). With their real names and social security numbers, law enforcement can track down their bank accounts and who has been paying them for the past several years (Wuxie Pharma).

The Ferguson Clinic

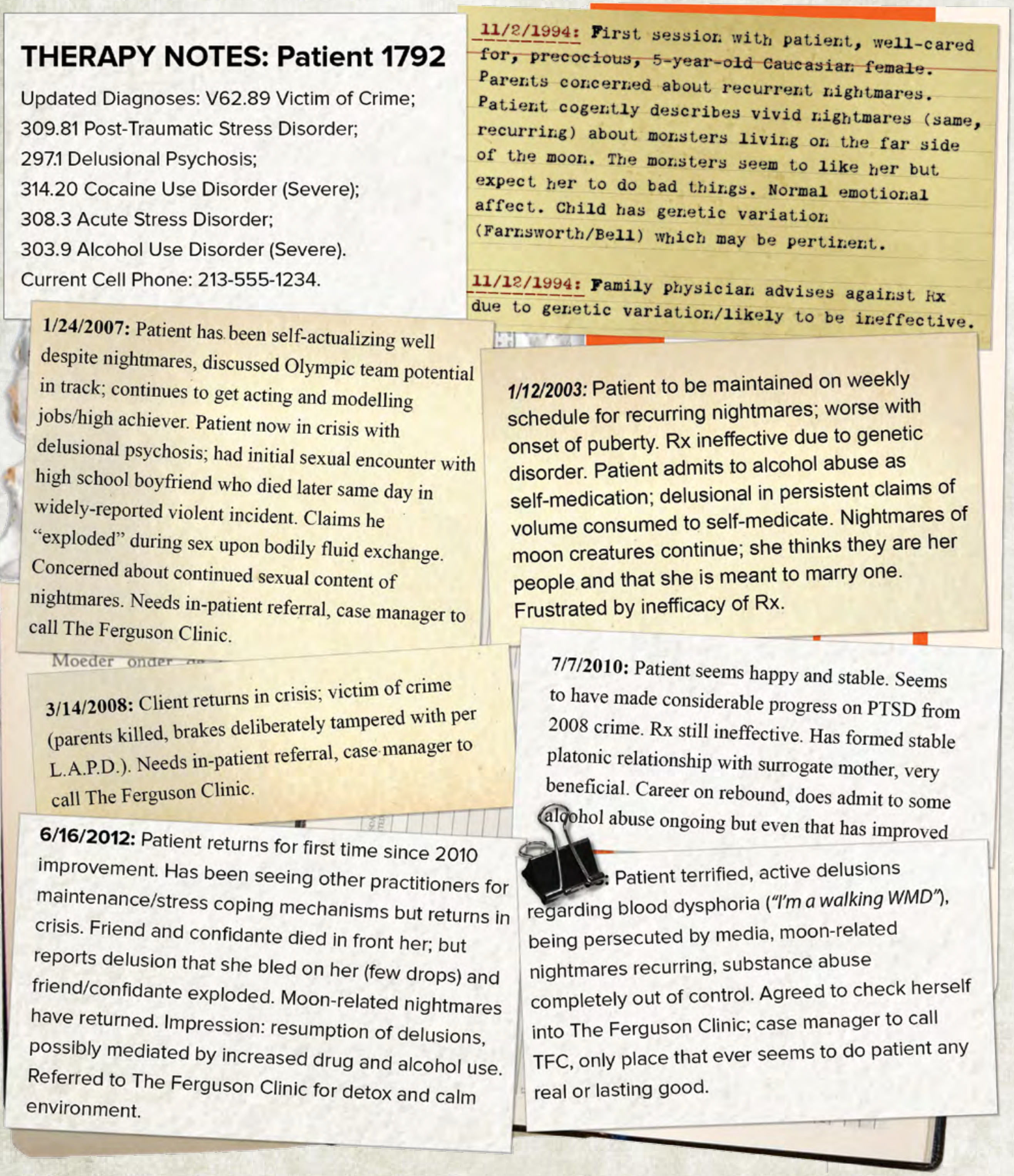
This is an exclusive, seven bed only, private psychiatric and drug rehabilitation clinic inconveniently located on a remote rural property near Bettie, Texas, about ½ hour north of I-20 and equidistant between Dallas and Shreveport, Louisiana. It is located in an old, two story antebellum mansion on 40 acres of fenced land. The area population is a whopping 110 with three stores. It has a staff of nine: Dr. Ferguson (the only doctor); three nurses (Shayna, Barb, and Louise, all middle-aged Caucasian females from the area); one policeman/security guard; one secretary/billing clerk and three orderlies/cooks. It promises the personal attention of a workaholic psychiatrist (Ferguson), discretion ("trespassers will be shot" is their motto), and peace and quiet. It costs $20,000 a week and they have no shortage of potential clients.

There are several ways in which the investigators could ultimately find themselves here:

- They might get London's cell phone number, and law enforcement might be able to track it. It comes back on once she feels safe at the Clinic, enabling law enforcement to track its pings.
- They might get access to Dr. Clek's treatment notes, which lead them here.
- Depending on their relationship with Jules Thomas, one of his bribed contacts might tell him of her whereabouts and he might try to make common cause with them (he wants an exclusive and their help in getting it; in exchange, he will tell them where she is).

- Frank might tip them off, in which case, he, Lori (if she is still in play), and Dr. Ferguson are planning to frame them for London's murder (or enable them to commit it if they don't need framing).
- Fang is London's cat; it is commonly known that London is not fond of dogs, and they are not fond of her. She has her own Twitter page, was the subject of a lot of film time on *London Falling*, and London takes her everywhere. Fang starts updating "her" Twitter account once London is at the Clinic, making allusions to "vacation" and even posting a picture of the Clinic's interior. The paparazzi are familiar with the Clinic's appearance, and the investigators simply have to follow the stream of pests.

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #7



THERAPY NOTES: Patient 1792

Updated Diagnoses: V62.89 Victim of Crime;
309.81 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder;
297.1 Delusional Psychosis;
314.20 Cocaine Use Disorder (Severe);
308.3 Acute Stress Disorder;
303.9 Alcohol Use Disorder (Severe).
Current Cell Phone: 213-555-1234.

11/2/1994: First session with patient, well-cared for, precocious, 5-year-old Caucasian female. Parents concerned about recurrent nightmares. Patient cogently describes vivid nightmares (same, recurring) about monsters living on the far side of the moon. The monsters seem to like her but expect her to do bad things. Normal emotional affect. Child has genetic variation (Farnsworth/Bell) which may be pertinent.

11/12/1994: Family physician advises against Rx due to genetic variation/likely to be ineffective.

1/12/2003: Patient to be maintained on weekly schedule for recurring nightmares; worse with onset of puberty. Rx ineffective due to genetic disorder. Patient admits to alcohol abuse as self-medication; delusional in persistent claims of volume consumed to self-medicate. Nightmares of moon creatures continue; she thinks they are her people and that she is meant to marry one. Frustrated by inefficacy of Rx.

1/24/2007: Patient has been self-actualizing well despite nightmares, discussed Olympic team potential in track; continues to get acting and modelling jobs/high achiever. Patient now in crisis with delusional psychosis; had initial sexual encounter with high school boyfriend who died later same day in widely-reported violent incident. Claims he "exploded" during sex upon bodily fluid exchange. Concerned about continued sexual content of nightmares. Needs in-patient referral, case manager to call The Ferguson Clinic.

Moeder onder

3/14/2008: Client returns in crisis; victim of crime (parents killed, brakes deliberately tampered with per L.A.P.D.). Needs in-patient referral, case manager to call The Ferguson Clinic.

7/7/2010: Patient seems happy and stable. Seems to have made considerable progress on PTSD from 2008 crime. Rx still ineffective. Has formed stable platonic relationship with surrogate mother, very beneficial. Career on rebound, does admit to some alcohol abuse ongoing but even that has improved

6/16/2012: Patient returns for first time since 2010 improvement. Has been seeing other practitioners for maintenance/stress coping mechanisms but returns in crisis. Friend and confidante died in front her; but reports delusion that she bled on her (few drops) and friend/confidante exploded. Moon-related nightmares have returned. Impression: resumption of delusions, possibly mediated by increased drug and alcohol use. Referred to The Ferguson Clinic for detox and calm environment.

: Patient terrified, active delusions regarding blood dysphoria (*"I'm a walking WMD"*), being persecuted by media, moon-related nightmares recurring, substance abuse completely out of control. Agreed to check herself into The Ferguson Clinic; case manager to call TFC, only place that ever seems to do patient any real or lasting good.

The town's one policeman, Sven "Doc" Berglowe, does double duty as the security guard for the clinic, so he is an actual law enforcement officer not afraid to arrest or shoot those who deserve it. He has zero tolerance for people trying to break in to the clinic and is rarely at the town hall. The police station, on a day-to-day basis, operates out of his office at the clinic, and that is where 911 calls go. He can call for backup from neighboring towns or the Texas Rangers, but they take about 30 minutes to arrive under ideal conditions.

The good news for the investigators is that he is a generally well-intentioned sort who knows nothing of Dr. Ferguson's sadistic proclivities or plans for London Sinclair.

The entire perimeter has had a 10-foot-high stone wall erected around it, with embedded and not obvious razor wire along the top of it (making scaling it difficult, even with a rope or ladder—Hard **Climb** check, people not expecting razor wire at the top must make a **Luck** roll or suffer 1D4 damage). The entire perimeter of the wall is covered by well-concealed security cameras feeding to both the nurse's station and the security desk at the gate (**Spot Hidden** to even notice; Hard **Stealth** to effectively bypass without being seen or Hard **Electronics** to trick with a distraction like a momentary natural obstruction (bird) or static footage loop).

The only proper way in is through one gate at the front of the facility. There is a small guardhouse where Officer Berglowe is found during his shift (8 am to 6pm). He lives nearby at other times and requires ten minutes to respond to a call. If Officer Berglowe is not on duty, the gate is closed; calls for special admittance after hours go to his cell phone and he decides if the excuse is worth responding to or if the caller needs to come back the next day. Alarm trips ping his cell phone and he arrives, armed, in ten minutes. The doors and windows of the clinic (except for the deliberate security blind spot) are monitored from the nurse's station 24/7, and any undue behavior is immediately called in to Berglowe.

There are weaknesses in this system, as with any. One is deliberate: Dr. Ferguson's parking spot is not on a camera. There is a back entrance to which only he has the key that is not on camera. This much is known to the staff. What is not known to the staff is that, beneath the stairwell adjoining that door, is an antebellum hidden panel leading to a surgical theater where Dr. Ferguson conducts his depravities.

The others are staff-driven: Other than between 8am and 6am, the cameras are monitored from the nurse's station, and if there is a distraction that occupies the staff, the cameras aren't watched. All doors and windows are alarmed to go off if entered without a key (**Locksmith** check to bypass without setting off the alarms); the alarms are loud and alert both Berglowe and Dr. Ferguson's cell phones.

Dr. Adam Ferguson

A skilled psychotherapist with a particular knack for calming people down, Dr. Ferguson is a portly, sixty-year-old Caucasian male with a good reputation and no criminal record. He is a workaholic who has a bedroom adjoining his first-floor office. Unless he is on vacation (rare), or at a friend's location to participate in some videotaped sadistic depravity (sadly all too common), he is at his clinic, working and making money. He is unmarried and has no children that he admits to. His knack for calming people down allows him to both earn a lot of money and further his circle of fellow sadists' activities by prolonging tortures. Occasionally he hosts such activities, drawing fellow sadists from around the globe, at his hidden surgical theater, but he travels fairly often to other sites. He comes across as extremely buttoned-down and controlled, bordering on unflappable.

He has zero use for well-meaning investigators without a search warrant. Who might be here is none of their business. Trespassers are arrested and/or shot. Law enforcement visitors are greeted during business hours only in his office. They are not given tours, nor are details of who is at his clinic shared without a warrant (health care information is confidential), but are otherwise treated politely. CDC quarantine threats are likewise told to come back with a court order, which, without proof of a biohazard (and proof that a person is a biohazard), are not quickly obtained. However, such a threat accelerates his timetable and he moves quickly to get rid of London Sinclair. He might be successfully **Fast Talked** (as might his staff) into letting something slip, or failing to stop a pushy infiltrator with a plausible excuse from wandering the halls, as might his staff.

Inside of the Clinic

From the inside, the clinic looks like a fancy Victorian bed and breakfast, with the ground floor having been converted to a doctor's office where necessary, but otherwise untouched. The second floor is, essentially, an antique filled guest house with ten bedrooms. All rooms are single occupancy; seven are for patients (and have medical equipment and monitors amid the bed and breakfast room surroundings); two are for camp followers, and one has been converted to a day spa. London has a room that adjoins one of the camp follower rooms; Jess Bell is in that room. He is armed (in violation of the rules); she has her cell phone (also in violation of the rules). They have been waiting for the usual contraband search, which strangely has not come. They have not noticed that the alarm on her window has been disabled, either.

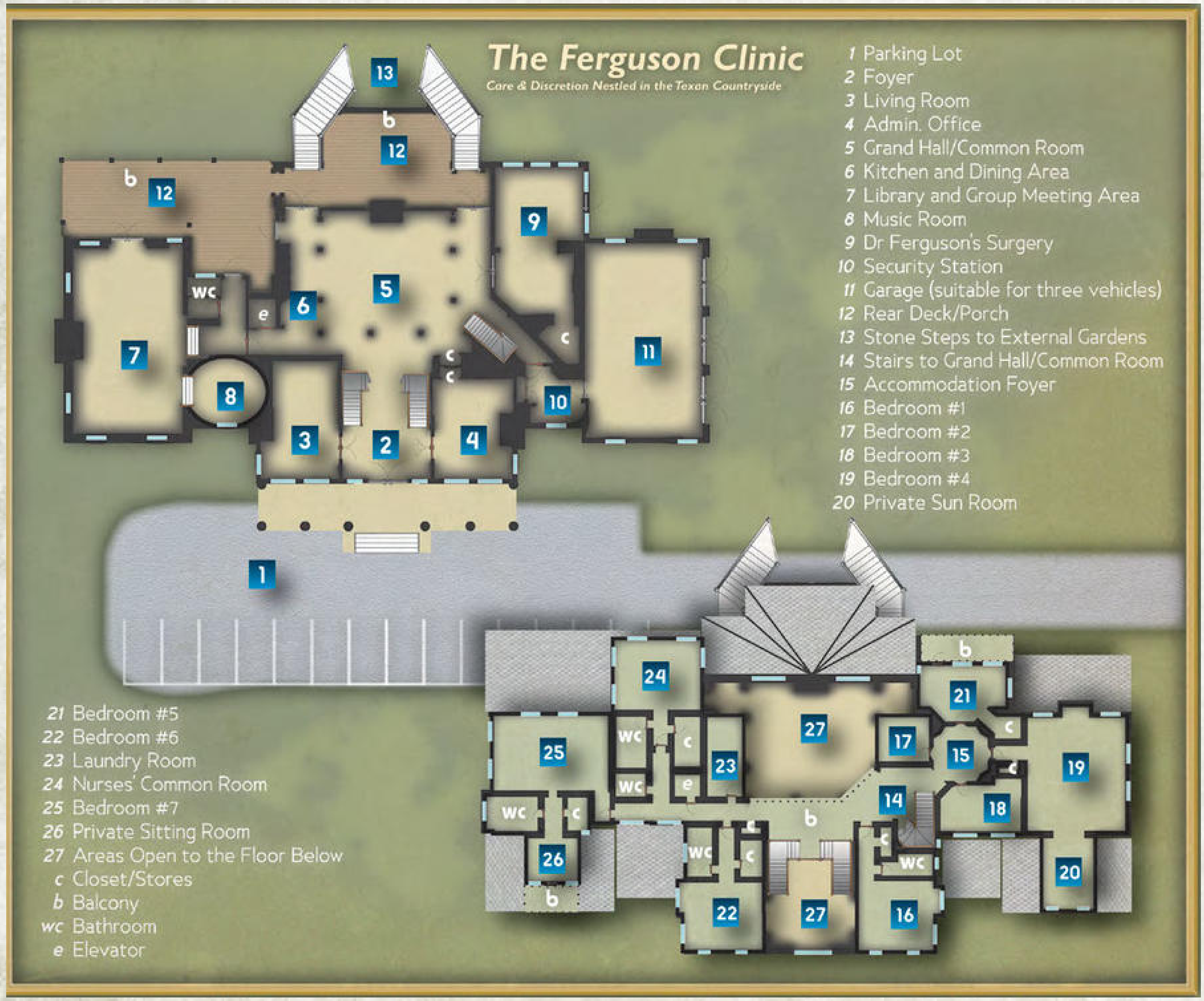
Interview, London Sinclair

Achieving an interview with her voluntarily is extraordinarily unlikely. About the only way this could happen is if the investigators leave an intriguing enough message on her cell phone's voice mail. Things that might make her call back (successful **Persuade** roll) are a law enforcement officer leaving her a message to call back to a verifiable law enforcement number (which is more likely to get Jess Bell to handle the chore); and a call from a surviving Dr. Clek (which she will return). Involving Dr. Clek gives the players a bonus die on all efforts to get London to believe and/or cooperate with them. She is a wreck, physically and emotionally—wracked with guilt about what happened at the phlebotomy lab, and scared out of her wits. But under no circumstances does she admit to a bunch of strangers that she is anything other than a stalked, put upon, fully human celebutante.

Only two things will get her attention, either in person or over the phone:

- Plausible, detail-backed threats against her safety. She is not dumb and is not afraid to ask how even law enforcement investigators know what they are telling her. If **Persuaded** (or **Fast Talked** into temporarily accepting) that Dr. Ferguson is involved in some threat to her security, she will agree to allow the investigators to assist her, and instruct Jess Bell to help them get her out of the Clinic (and into protective custody). Non-law enforcement investigators get a penalty die; journalists get a penalty die and must succeed in a Hard check to boot.

- Suggesting that Jess Bell (or the Patriarch's cult) was involved in the murder of her parents. If this comes from a law enforcement source, there is a long, long pause, and then she asks, very calmly and sotto voce, why they think that. She is aware that someone tampered with her parents' brakes and has wondered why her "real father" finally surfaced shortly thereafter. If they mention the pickup truck with Ohio plates that was involved in causing the accident—something the police missed—she thanks them for the information and then hangs up and turns her cell phone off while she processes the information. The next day (or at some dramatically appropriate moment), she calls the investigators back and asks them to quietly help her leave and get her somewhere safe (no matter who they are). She thanks them for being honest with her, and hopes they are decent human beings. If she runs into them in person in the interim, she is cooperative in efforts to extract her, and distinctly cold to Jess Bell (whom she will use to escape, but then either turn in to law enforcement or murder, depending on events and whether she thinks that she can get away with it).


The Ferguson Clinic
Care & Discretion Nestled in the Texan Countryside
1 Parking Lot
2 Foyer
3 Living Room
4 Admin. Office
5 Grand Hall/Common Room
6 Kitchen and Dining Area
7 Library and Group Meeting Area
8 Music Room
9 Dr Ferguson's Surgery
10 Security Station
11 Garage (suitable for three vehicles)
12 Rear Deck/Porch
13 Stone Steps to External Gardens
14 Stairs to Grand Hall/Common Room
15 Accommodation Foyer
16 Bedroom #1
17 Bedroom #2
18 Bedroom #3
19 Bedroom #4
20 Private Sun Room
21 Bedroom #5
22 Bedroom #6
23 Laundry Room
24 Nurses' Common Room
25 Bedroom #7
26 Private Sitting Room
27 Areas Open to the Floor Below
c Closet/Stores
b Balcony
wc Bathroom
e Elevator

Interview, Jess Bell

Jess is hanging out at yet another rehab clinic, restlessly indifferent to the entire proceeding. To him, this is just another day at the office, shepherding The Patriarch's messianic daughter along her path to destiny. He is a ruthless, insane cultist whose mission statement is to do his best to help London do whatever she wants. He runs errands for her and runs interference for her. He is savvy enough about the law to know that, without a warrant, law enforcement has no right to insist to speak to her, and will not be bullied or intimidated. He will generally refuse to talk to anyone except law enforcement, with whom he will answer reasonable, non-incriminating questions.

It is possible to goad him into violence, leading to his arrest (although Officer Berglowe will try to defuse any such situation to the best of his ability in the aftermath). It is also possible to compel him at gunpoint to help the investigators infiltrate the compound (although he seems less nervous around guns than a normal person might—he knows guns are not particularly effective against the Farnsworth/Bell clan. In fact, for a bodyguard, he seems generally unperturbed about physical threats to London not involving fire, acid, or bombs—he knows that anything short of that isn't likely to make a dent. If she seems to be "killed," he is more interested in securing the body and making sure that all of her parts are accounted for.

If approached by cooperative law enforcement (grant a bonus die to **Persuade** checks) and given a detail oriented reason to believe that London is not safe, he will consult with London and follow her instructions.

Infiltrating the Clinic

Barring out and out burglary and defeating numerous security systems (which might prove surprisingly easy to beat if the investigators are expected, see below), there are a number of ways to infiltrate the clinic.

- There is daily linen service and daily food deliveries via panel trucks from Longview (the nearest city of any size), both arriving around 8am These trucks could be commandeered, hidden in, or used as a diversion to scale the wall while Berglowe is occupied with them. He only tends to give each a cursory search unless he suspicions are piqued (such as by an unusual driver or a very nervous seeming driver).

- Electronic snooping (with parabolic microphones from outside the wall, or telephoto lenses) is fairly easy to accomplish. Eventually, persistent surveillance can identify London's room and second story window.

- London will send Jess Bell out on errands several times a day, to fulfill snack requests, get Fang the cat some air, to get some new clothes (going all the way to Dallas for this), or what have you. He can be commandeered (with difficulty), have a bug or other surveillance device put on him, or possibly even be reasoned with and used to smuggle someone in. If convinced that there is a plot against London's life, say by Wuxie Pharma, he obviously wants to prevent it.

- It is even possible that an investigator might get London's cell phone number, call it, and she might even pick up (few people have it, and she definitely answers calls from Dr. Clek's number).

- Extended and careful surveillance might also notice that Dr. Ferguson parks in the attached garage (Area 11) which leads directly (via a normally locked door) into a hallway that leads directly to his office and bedroom suite (Area 9). The camera covering the garage entrance is a dummy. If Dr. Ferguson is aware that the investigators are surveilling him, he might deliberately let them get a glimpse of him entering this way.

- Officer Berglowe can be easily lured away by creating a police emergency somewhere in Bettie.

- If the paparazzi are tipped off as to where London is, they show up and camp out at the gates, straining Officer Berglowe's attention, forcing him to remain on station, and likely attempting poorly-conceived efforts to infiltrate the facility to snap a picture. Eventually, absent investigator interference, they are deliberately tipped off by Frank or Dr. Ferguson to move to the end game.

Daily Routine: Normal day hours are 8am to 6pm. Shifts are as follows:

8am to 6pm: one cook/orderly, day nurse, Officer Berglowe, Dr. Ferguson, secretary.

6pm to 1am: one cook/orderly, swing shift nurse, Dr. Ferguson on site unless away.

1am to 8am: night nurse, one cook/orderly, Dr. Ferguson on site unless away.

London stays in her room, even taking meals there. She does not use the spa. She spends her days cuddling with Fang, crying, reading magazines, and undergoing in-room psychotherapy with Dr. Ferguson—one of the few people in the world that she trusts. She is paying triple normal rates for privacy, so she is the only patient for her contemplated week-long stay. Investigators wanting to pose as patients and get in that way will have to succeed in an Extreme **Credit Rating** check (or be notoriously wealthy and famous people themselves) and pony up $60,000 for a week's stay. If they fail, they are politely turned away.

Ferguson's Office

This wing of the building contains a nicely-appointed business office and also a bedroom/bathroom which is where Ferguson lives most of the time. (He has country houses in several different countries, but is a workaholic.) There are a few things of note to be found here:

- There is a new, elaborate security system on the door to his office, requiring a thumbprint to enter. Only Ferguson's works; others desiring entrance must bypass it with an Extreme **Electronics** check or force the door, resulting in both a loud alarm and a silent alarm to Officer Berglowe.

- There is a new computer in his office, in contrast (**Spot Hidden**) to the age and model of the rest of the clinic's systems. (The last one has been erased with a sledgehammer.)

- A thorough search of his bedroom reveals a floor safe under his bed. If accessed (it again requires Ferguson's thumbprint, an Extreme **Electronics** check, or physical smashing to access), inside are all of the videos and mementos of his sadistic brutalization of people unlikely to be missed. **SAN** loss for viewing the hundreds of hours of videos, stretching back many years, is 1/1D3. There is enough evidence in this safe to have Ferguson executed by the State of Texas, but he just can't bear to part with it. Should non-law enforcement investigators find this stash, he will try to kill them (possibly with the assistance of Frank and Lori—who will help him if it will not jeopardize the goal of eliminating London).

The Secret Operating Theater and Deliberate Security Blind Spots

Behind a very well concealed (Hard **Spot Hidden** roll to find it), antebellum hidden door, just beyond the door in from the garage (Area 11), deliberately out of sight of the nurse's station, is a stairway leading down into the foundation of the house. It has not been modernized; the stairs are original stone slabs. Arc lamps have been set into the ceilings; the whole thing has the look of a not-often-used cellar. At the bottom is an old oaken door, likewise antebellum. It is padlocked (there are no cameras or high-tech security devices in evidence). Dr. Ferguson has the key on his keyring; otherwise, a **Locksmith** roll or a bolt-cutter defeats the lock.

Behind the door lies horror. Inside is a cross between a surgical theater, and a torture chamber set up in an old root cellar. Lighting is poor for any legitimate medical procedures, and there is a drain in the floor in which any number of small human bones, such as snipped off fingers, might be found. Forensic examination will find blood and other stains here and there that someone has tried mightily to clean up, but still missed a few places. There is a surgical table with arm, leg, and head restraints; all manner of sedatives and anesthesia; several car batteries connected in series with jumper cables; an antique but functional "French pear" that has seen its share of use, amputation knives and saws, and whatever other suggestive matters you wish to place. Sounds from down here cannot be heard up above. There is more than enough in this room to arrest Dr. Ferguson with little ado, and even Berglowe will blanche and assist in the arrest if he sees this.

There are two deliberate security blind spots in the Clinic's defenses. The first is long-standing; it is possible for Dr. Ferguson to go off camera between the gate and his torture chamber, so that he can have his little parties without being seen other than coming and going. This allows him to smuggle victims in via his car, while creating plausible deniability given the level of overall security. The second is that Dr. Ferguson has personally disabled the security system on London's second story window.

If the Investigators Allow Things to Progress Without Interference

Things at the Ferguson Clinic should quickly grow chaotic. Dr. Ferguson, Frank, and Lori have manipulated events to get London here, out of the public eye, to kill her. They do not wish to go to jail for this, and so want to either set patsies up to take the fall, or make it look like an accident.

The conspirators have several possible plans; which they decide to implement depends on the lay of the land. Any of these plans could be implemented at an optimal time when Jess Bell has been sent on some errand (which happens frequently):

- Allow seemingly like-minded investigators (with or without Frank's help) to infiltrate the Clinic and kill London themselves. It is entirely possible that certain groups of investigators may decide (accurately) that London is a "thing" and needs to be eliminated. The same goes for Jess Bell. If possible, Frank will assist them by suggesting surveillance, waiting for either Jess Bell to leave London unguarded and/or for them to discover the back-door security hole (when Dr. Ferguson goes in). Alternatively, they might see London open her window absent-mindedly for a smoke (which is inconsistent with the whole place being alarmed). They might then attempt some second-story work.

If London is seemingly killed (either by investigator violence, or by falling from her window during an escape attempt), strangely, Berglowe and elements of the media are there very quickly, likely complicating if not thwarting an investigator escape. Dr. Ferguson attempts to revive her (in actuality, collecting some samples). Once such a situation stabilizes, proceed to the **Not Quite Dead Yet** endgame. Note that London's physiology is not normal; she tends to break into pieces when subjected to meaningful violence (and said pieces then, when the coast is clear, tend to scuttle back together. She is capable of regenerating long after seeming to be killed, unless affirmative methods are taken to prevent it, such as keeping her major segments separate, burning her, or dissolving her in acid. Although Frank and Lori suspect this and have prepared such a site (which they will spirit the body away to if they have a chance in the chaos), Ferguson is unaware of this, and may get surprised.

- Ferguson may stage a gruesome accident, in a seeming effort to help London avoid harassers who have somehow gotten into his Clinic. While the investigators who have snuck in, paparazzi who have snuck in, or both are dealing with Berglowe or overmatched nurses, Ferguson convinces her to go out the window and meet him at his car. Then he slams the vertical sash window on her head, decapitating her and sending the head in the room and leaving the rest of her to fall. The window is found to be old, heavy and dangerous. If she is kept separated and her body thoroughly destroyed by acid or fire (or "gets lost" somehow), then a wrongful death lawsuit is settled by his insurance company for tens of millions of dollars. Her will leaves everything to her cat, which is adopted by her biological father and mother. If she is not kept separated, go to the **Not Quite Dead Yet** endgame.

- Left unmolested and unwatched, Ferguson, Frank, and/or Lori (depending on who is available) lure her into the basement torture chamber. She is seen on camera going past the nurse's station toward the back door, where she is subdued by Frank and/or Lori (quietly) and hauled into the basement for vivisection. Ferguson then comes in to the basement from the garage and experiments on her while Frank and/or Lori drive off in a rental car with obscured plates. The story that is planned is that London snuck out the back, met up with whoever managed to sneak past the gate in that rental car to spring her, and drove off. She then disappears and the media runs wild with stories of her "mysterious disappearance." The plan is further to smuggle out the body in small bits the same way, to avoid detection, and take it to the Wuxie Pharma storage unit for acid-based disposal.

- Any of these options might be facilitated by tipping off the paparazzi as to London's whereabouts, for the sake of creating a distraction.

Changing the Equation

Taking London's Side? The investigators might decide that they want to either take London into custody alive (i.e., put her into a more secure quarantine or arrest her on involuntary manslaughter charges for the negligent deaths she has caused over the years). They might also go in to the situation knowing that there is a plot to kill her, and deciding that they just don't like vigilante justice, even against Mythos hybrids. The intent of the scenario is to provoke a discussion, at least, about what should be done with her. She is theoretically capable of living a quiet life somewhere, and has never deliberately harmed anyone. She is also more than happy, if she figures out that Jess Bell killed her adoptive parents, of helping to expose and convict him. On the other hand, despite some level of effort, she keeps accidentally killing people. She might be willing to submit to some sort of (comfortable) detention, although gaining her trust should be thoroughly roleplayed out and extremely difficult to achieve.

Note that London will not voluntarily leave her cat, Fang, behind. The little beast is a biter and a scratcher (she even bites London), possibly causing an open wound. Anyone with an open wound who is near London when she has an open wound must succeed in a **Luck** roll. Failure results in agonizing, explosive death unless they succeed in a second, Extreme **Luck** roll with a penalty die (in which case, they too carry the Farnsworth/Bell gene and are immune to the effects of her blood). Exploded victims devolve into 1D3+4 Pieces (use same statistics as at the phlebotomy lab).

Ruthless investigators might, of course, pretend to take her side, drive her to a "secure location" (the Wuxie storage unit), kill her, and dissolve her in acid.

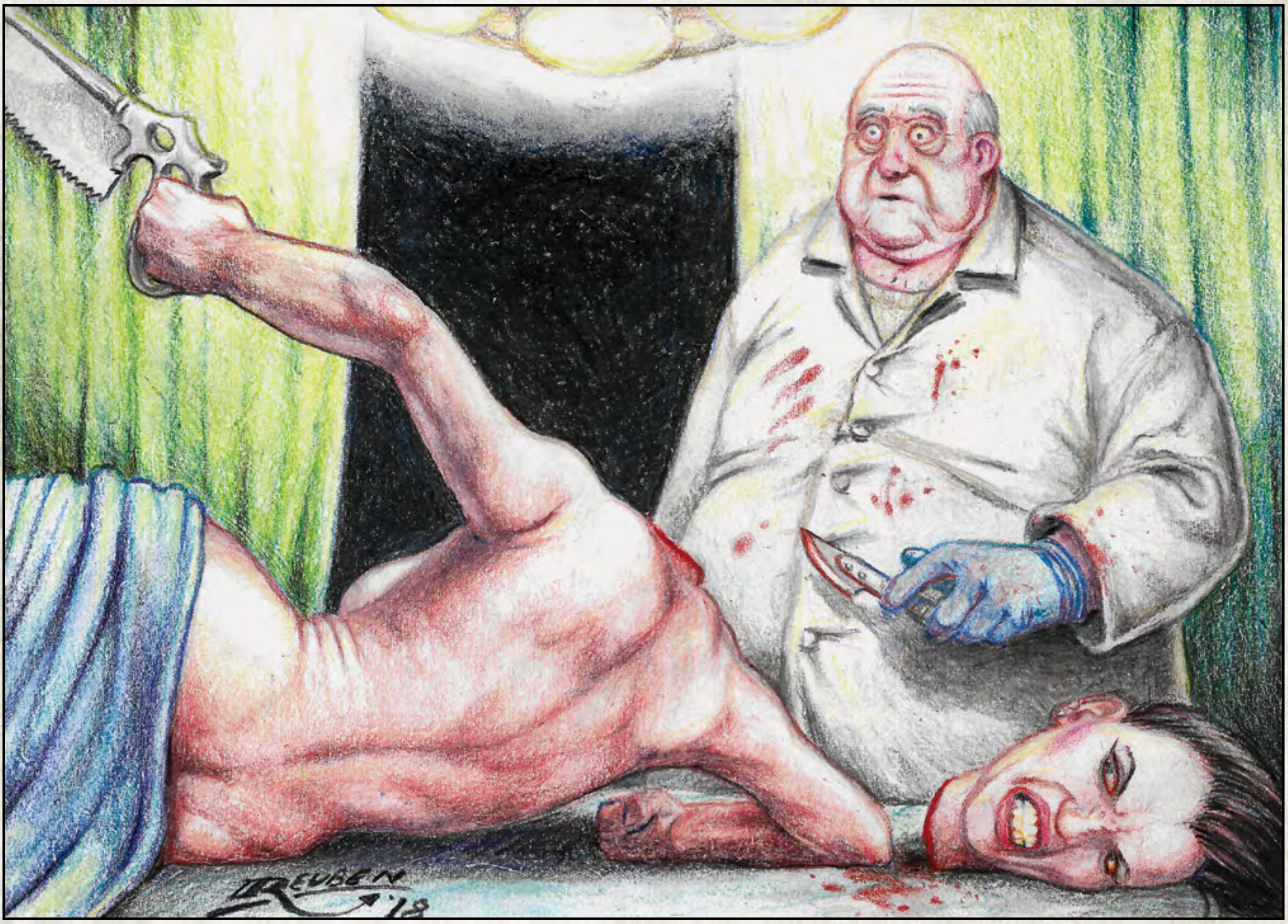
Involving Berglowe? It is possible that credentialed law enforcement might be able to convince Officer Berglowe that there is a threat to London's safety, with a detail-oriented explanation (**Persuade** check). He is not inclined to listen to anyone other than law enforcement officials (others need a Hard **Persuade** check with a penalty die). If he is convinced, his instinct is to play mediator and peacemaker between his employer and the life blood of his town (Ferguson) and apparently well-meaning strangers who seem to have some legitimate questions. This forces Ferguson's hand—he shoots Berglowe from behind, tries his best to kill the investigators, and Frank and/or Lori move to eliminate London while people are occupied.

Calling the Press? This is an excellent way for either side to create a distraction. Paparazzi of all shapes and sizes show up quickly if they are tipped off that London is at the clinic (including Jules Thomas). They camp out, test the security (perhaps finding holes), overwhelm Berglowe (who calls in reinforcements) and generally sow chaos. All concerned parties might make a move for London in such a situation.

Not Quite Dead Yet!

Efforts to kill London Sinclair must go to extreme lengths, or they fail spectacularly. Even smashed and cut to pieces, her seed of consciousness inhabits her entire body. Wounds seal and her body parts instinctively try to scuttle to one another and reassemble themselves. She would have to be kept separated to the point where she starves (weeks) for ordinary damage to truly end her. In game terms, her body parts act independently (use the statistics, again, for the Pieces) and she regenerates 1 hit point per minute, even after "death," if her head and torso are accounted for. Limbs slither toward her torso and reattach themselves. Only fire, acid, or magic prevents the regeneration.

As a result, anyone in possession of her body—even if she has been decapitated—is at risk if she is of a mind to kill them. She is an actress and adept at playing possum when seemingly dead, only to pop up and have however many Pieces she is in attack—either in isolation or coordination. Even if Dr.



Ferguson gets her into his torture chamber—strapped down or not—she is easily capable of killing him and escaping. The same goes for the investigators or Frank and Lori. As they prepare to light her remains on fire or drop them into an acid barrel, her eyes pop open. She seems genuinely sad if betrayed by them and may plead to just be left in peace, even as the rest of her is choking them out with her entrails or slashing them open and bleeding into them to cause them to fatally mutate. **SAN** loss to see her as active Pieces, long after she seems to have been killed, is 1/1D8.

If she escapes, then depending on the lay of the land, she may resurface as if nothing had happened, playing down "the exaggerations and crazy stories" about what happened to her at the Ferguson Clinic, or she might drop off the map. If the investigators are disclosed parties to any harm to London Sinclair and she escapes, they will have earned the enmity of the entire Farnswoth/Bell cult.

Rewards and Repercussions

Either eliminating London for good or achieving a humanitarian solution to her existence gains 1D6 **SAN**. If London escapes with no solution being achieved, the investigators lose 1D6 **SAN**. Eliminating the sociopathic Lori gains 1D3 **SAN**. Eliminating Jess Bell gains 1D3 **SAN**. Saving Dr. Clek gains 1D3 **SAN**. Bringing Dr. Ferguson to justice gains 1D6 **SAN**.

NPCs

LONDON SINCLAIR, Semi-human Celebrity

STR 65	CON 90	SIZ 65	INT 65	POW 65
DEX 65	APP 99	EDU 55	SAN 25	HP 15

Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 9 (slightly faster than normal human)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+db

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Charm 90%, Craft (Acting) 50%, Craft (Singing) 50%, Credit Rating 90%, Cthulhu Mythos 01%, Disguise 50%, Language (English) 75%, Listen 50%, Psychology 35%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%..
Defenses: Takes minimum damage from firearms and cutting/piercing attacks, and will eventually regenerate limbs and lost body parts at the rate of 1 HP per minute, but takes double damage from blunt instruments. If split into parts, each part can act separately (using the statistics for the Pieces from the phlebotomy lab).
Blood to blood contact is lethal for anyone not carrying some Farnsworth/Bell genes.
Nationality: American
Age: 27
Education: High school
Spells: none.
Indefinite Insanity: Substance Abuse Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. (The "delusions" she has been diagnosed with are unfortunately real.)
Blood to blood contact is lethal for anyone not carrying some Farnsworth/Bell genes.

JESS BELL, Kissin' Cousin

STR 90 CON 90 SIZ 90 INT 55 POW 65
DEX 60 APP 60 EDU 55 SAN 0 HP 18
Damage bonus: +1D6
Build: 2
Move: 9 (slightly faster than normal human)

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+db

Firearms (Shotgun) 50% (25/10), 2/round, 4D6/2D6/1D6, 10/20/50 yards, malfunction 00, capacity 5

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Craft (Agriculture) 50%, Credit Rating 10%, Cthulhu Mythos05%, Drive Automobile 30%, Language (English) 55%, Listen 50%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Occult 25%, Operate Heavy Machinery (Tractor) 50%, Natural World 50%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%, Survival (Forest) 50%.
Defenses: Takes minimum damage from firearms and cutting/piercing attacks, and will eventually regenerate limbs and lost body parts at the rate of 1 HP per day unless killed, but takes double damage from blunt instruments.
Nationality: American
Age: 35
Education: High school
Spells: none.
Sanity Loss: none.
Indefinite Insanity: Psychopathic murderer

DR. ADAM FERGUSON, Blackmail Victim and Sadist

STR 65 CON 60 SIZ 65 INT 85 POW 60
DEX 40 APP 60 EDU 85 SAN 0 HP 12
Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 6

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 30% (15/6), damage 1D3+db

Firearms (Handgun) 50% (25/10), .38 automatic: 1 or 3/round, 1D10, 15 yards, malfunction 99, capacity 8

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Computer Use 25%, Credit Rating 80%, Drive Automobile 30%, First Aid 70%, Language (English) 85%, Listen 50%, Psychology 80%, Psychoanalysis 80%, Spot Hidden 50%, Science (Pharmacology) 50%, Stealth 35%.
Defenses: None above base.
Nationality: American
Age: 55
Education: M.D. (Psychiatry), University of Texas
Spells: none.
Indefinite Insanity: Sadist

WUXIE PHARMA ENFORCERS (Frank and Lori)

Frank:
STR 75 CON 75 SIZ 65 INT 75 POW 65
DEX 60 APP 60 EDU 65 SAN 40 HP 14
Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 7

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 60% (30/12), damage 1D3+db

Firearms (Shotgun), 50%, 2/round, 4D6/2D6/1D6, 10/20/50 yards, malfunction 00, capacity 5

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Computer Use 33%, Credit Rating 40%, Drive Automobile 40%, Language (Arabic) 30%, Language (English) 70%, Library Use 50% Listen 50%, Occult 25%, Persuade 55%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%, Survival (Desert) 50%.
Nationality: American
Age: 47
Education: B.A. in Political Science, Washington State University
Defenses: none above base.
Spells: none.

Lori:
STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 70 INT 65 POW 65
DEX 80 APP 40 EDU 65 SAN 0 HP 14
Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 7

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 90% (45/18), 90% (possesses brown belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and black belt in Krav Maga)

Carries a small, ceramic, commando style dirk designed to evade metal detectors, 1D4+2+db

Firearms (Handgun), 70% (35/14), .45 automatic with silencer, 1 (3), 1D10+2, 15 yards, malfunction 00, capacity 7

Dodge 70% (70/14))

Skills: Computer Use 40%, Climb 50%, Credit Rating 50%, Drive Automobile 50%, Electronics 40%, First Aid 50%, Intimidate 50%, Language (Hebrew) 30%, Language (English) 65%, Listen 70%, Natural World 50%, Psychology 40%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 70%, Survival (Sea) 50%.
Nationality: American
Age: 48
Education: B.A., Psychology, Kent State University
Defenses: none above base.
Spells: none.
Indefinite Insanity: Sociopath

Notes: Easy to underestimate, looks like a middle aged, slightly overweight, unkempt mom. Known in hitman circles as "the lunch lady."

JULES THOMAS, Jackass Paparazzo

STR 55 CON 55 SIZ 60 INT 65 POW 45
DEX 80 APP 70 EDU 65 SAN 35 HP 11
Damage bonus: none.
Build: 0
Move: 8

ATTACKS

None above base; carries pepper spray 25% (12/5), damage stun, 6 feet.

Dodge 35% (17/7)

Skills:: Craft (Photography) 50%, Charm 40%, Computer Use 50%, Credit Rating 50%, Dodge 33%, Drive Motorcycle 30%, Electrical Repair 50%, Electronics 75%, Fast Talk 50%, Language (Spanish) 50%, Language (English) 70%, Law 25%, Library Use 50%, Listen 50%, Locksmith 33%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 50%.
Nationality: American
Age: 26
Education: Went to UCLA film school (for a year) on Daddy's dime, kicked out for "trashing a frat house in a drunken frenzy" (real reason not made public)
Defenses: none above base.
Spells: none.
Indefinite Insanity: Substance Abuse Disorder (mostly alcohol)

SVEN BERGLOWE, Well Intentioned Police Officer

STR 65 CON 70 SIZ 65 INT 55 POW 65
DEX 50 APP 50 EDU 60 SAN 65 13
Damage bonus: +1D4
Build: 1
Move: 8

ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 40% (20/8), damage 1D3+db)

Firearms (Shotgun), 50% (25/10), 2/round, 4D6/2D6/1D6, 10/20/50 yards, malfunction 00, capacity 5

Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Credit Rating 40%, Dodge 50%, Drive Automobile 30%, Language (Spanish) 40%, Language (English) 65%, Law 30%, Listen 50%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Natural World 50%, Persuade 40%, Spot Hidden 50%, Stealth 40%.
Nationality: American
Age: 49
Education: A.S., Criminal Justice, Northeast Texas Community College (NTCC)

THE PIECES, Scuttling, Mutated, Tentacular Former Body Parts

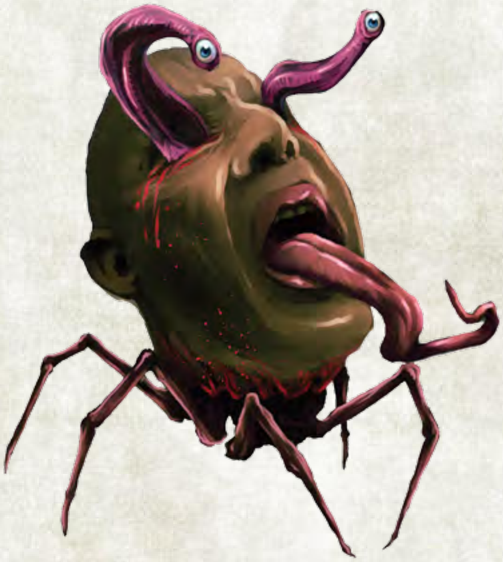
STR 55 CON 55 SIZ 25 INT 0 POW 55
DEX 55 HP 11
Damage bonus: none
Build: 0
Move: 8 (including along walls and ceilings)

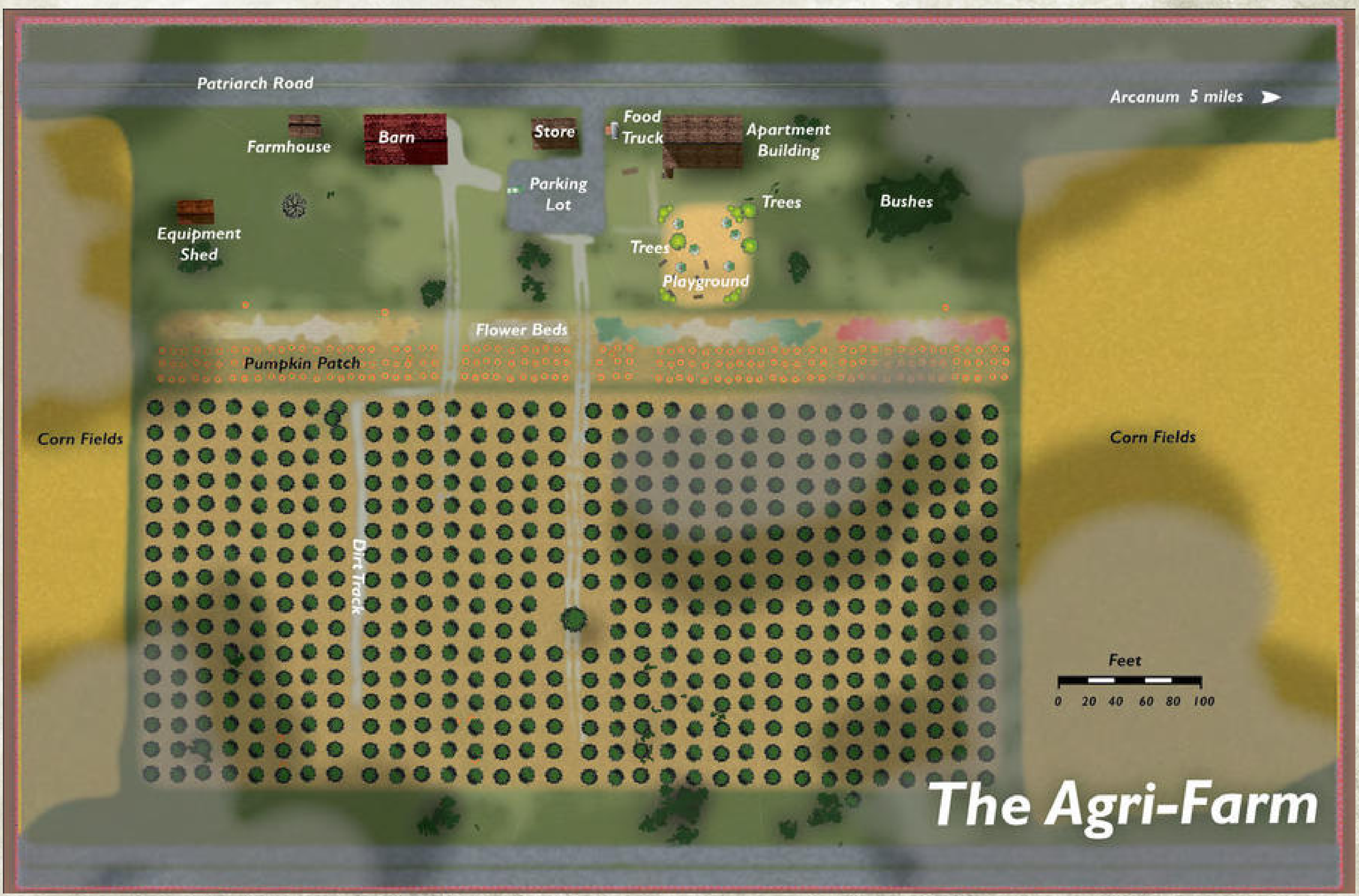
ATTACKS

Fighting (Brawl) 50% (25/10), damage 1D6 of flailing, strangling and biting with spontaneously generating, toothy maws.

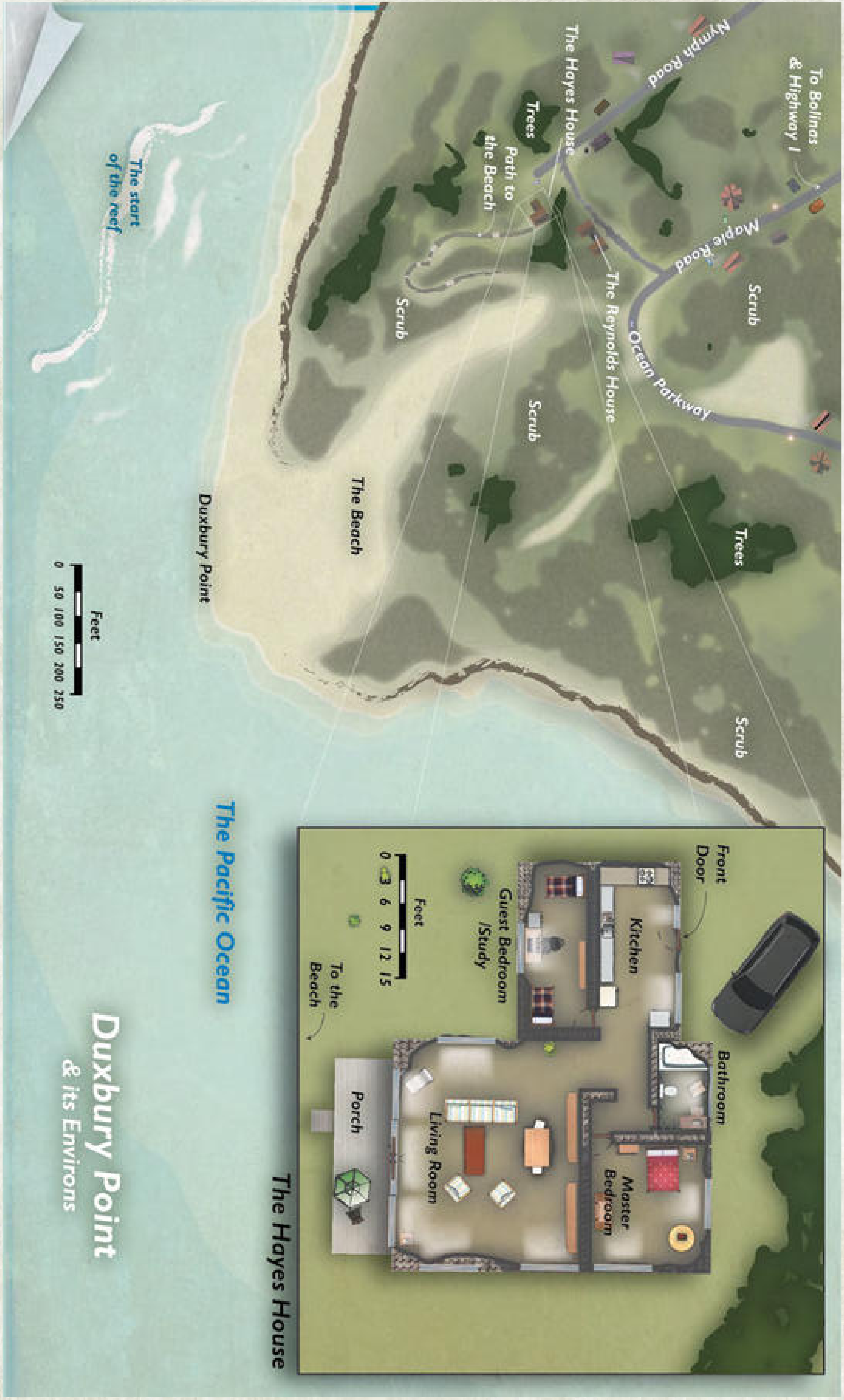
Dodge 50% (25/10)

Skills: Stealth 50%, Open Lab Room Door 0%.
Defenses: None above base.
SAN Loss: 0/1D6 for seeing one Piece, 1/1D10 for a group of them

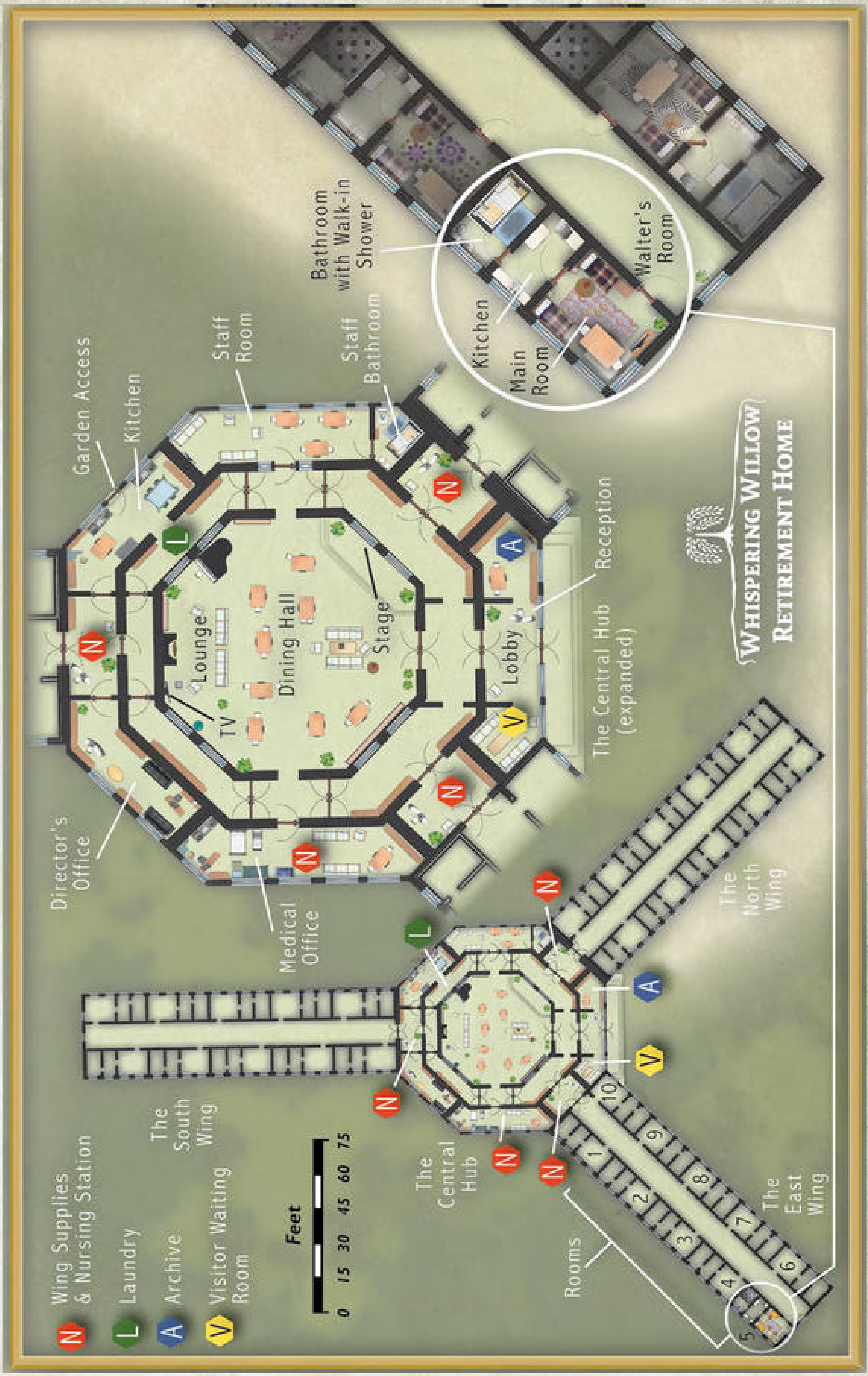



Patriarch Road
Arcanum 5 miles
Farmhouse
Barn
Store
Food Truck
Apartment Building
Parking Lot
Trees
Bushes
Equipment Shed
Trees
Playground
Flower Beds
Pumpkin Patch
Corn Fields
Corn Fields
Dirt Track
Feet
0 20 40 60 80 100
The Agri-Farm

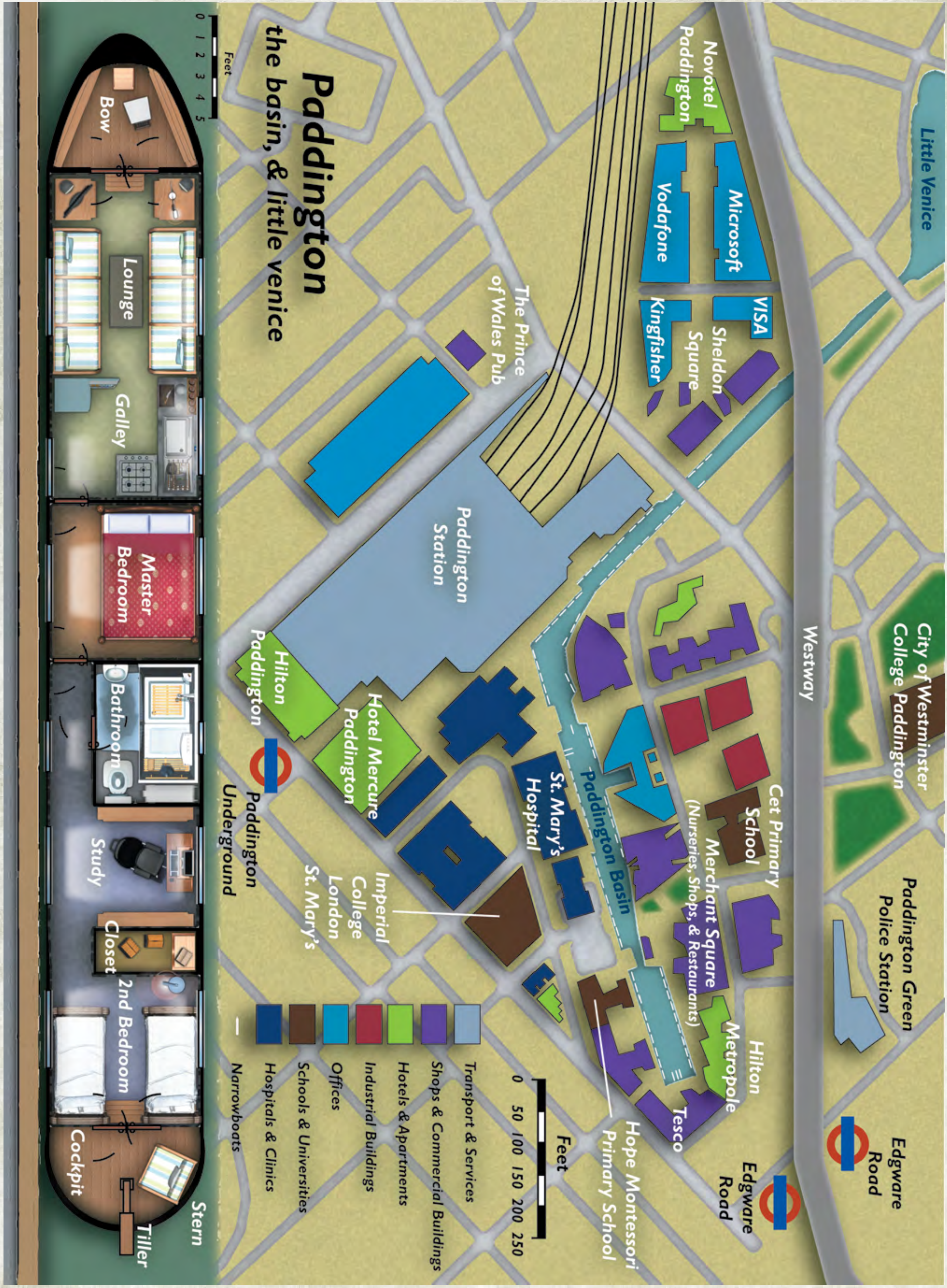
Separation Anxiety Map


Duxbury Point
& its Environs
The Pacific Ocean
The start of the reef
Duxbury Point
The Beach
Feet
0 50 100 150 200 250
Scrub
Scrub
Scrub
Scrub
Trees
Trees
Path to the Beach
The Hayes House
The Reynolds House
Nymph Road
Maple Road
Ocean Parkway
To Bolinas & Highway 1
The Hayes House
Front Door
Kitchen
Bathroom
Guest Bedroom /Study
Master Bedroom
Living Room
Porch
To the Beach
Feet
0 3 6 9 12 15

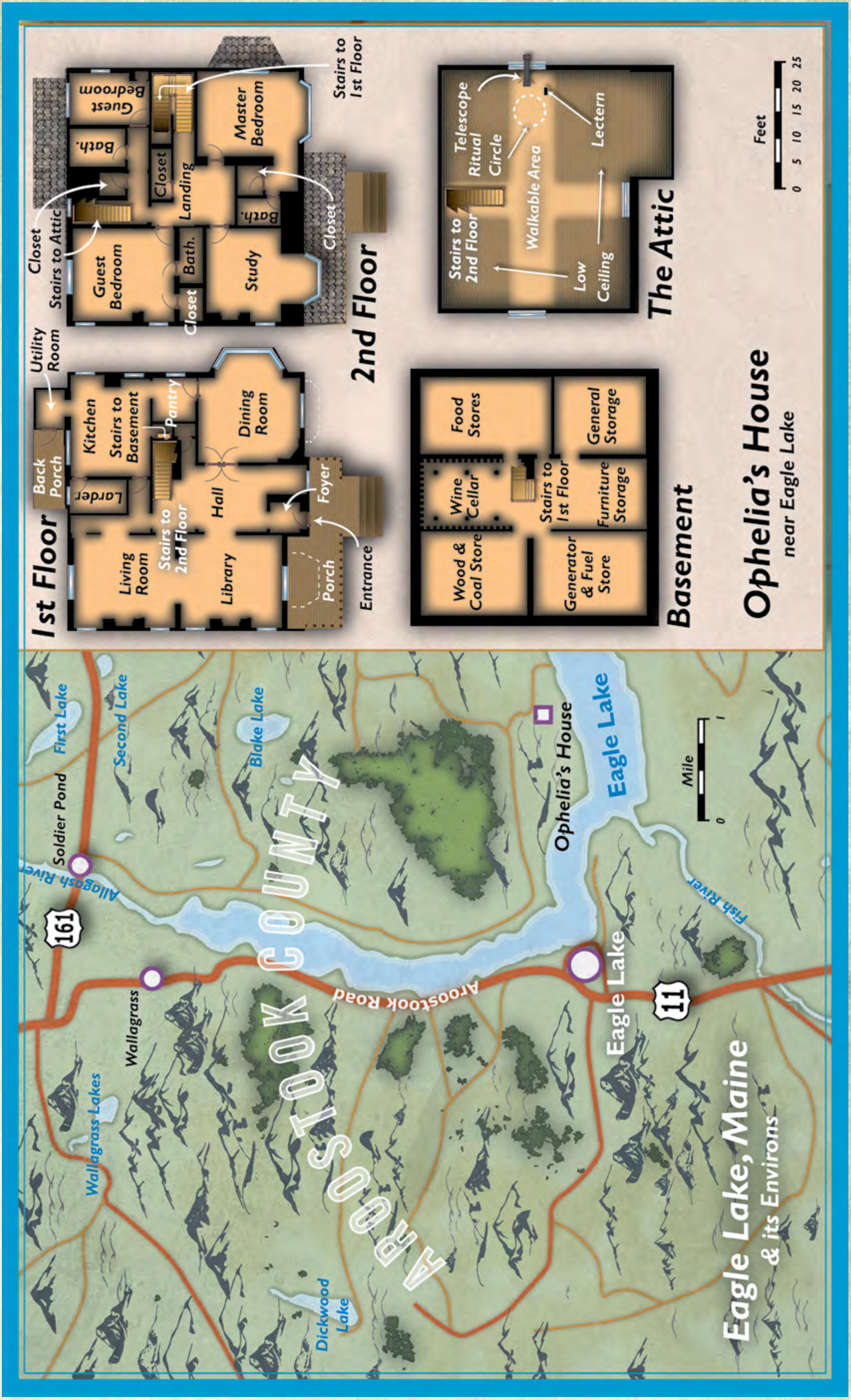
Undertow Map


N Wing Supplies & Nursing Station
L Laundry
A Archive
V Visitor Waiting Room
Feet
0 15 30 45 60 75
The South Wing
The Central Hub
Rooms
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
The East Wing
The North Wing
N
L
A
V
Director's Office
Medical Office
TV
Lounge
Dining Hall
Stage
Lobby
Reception
The Central Hub (expanded)
Garden Access
Kitchen
Staff Room
Staff Bathroom
Bathroom with Walk-in Shower
Kitchen
Main Room
Walter's Room
WHISPERING WILLOW RETIREMENT HOME

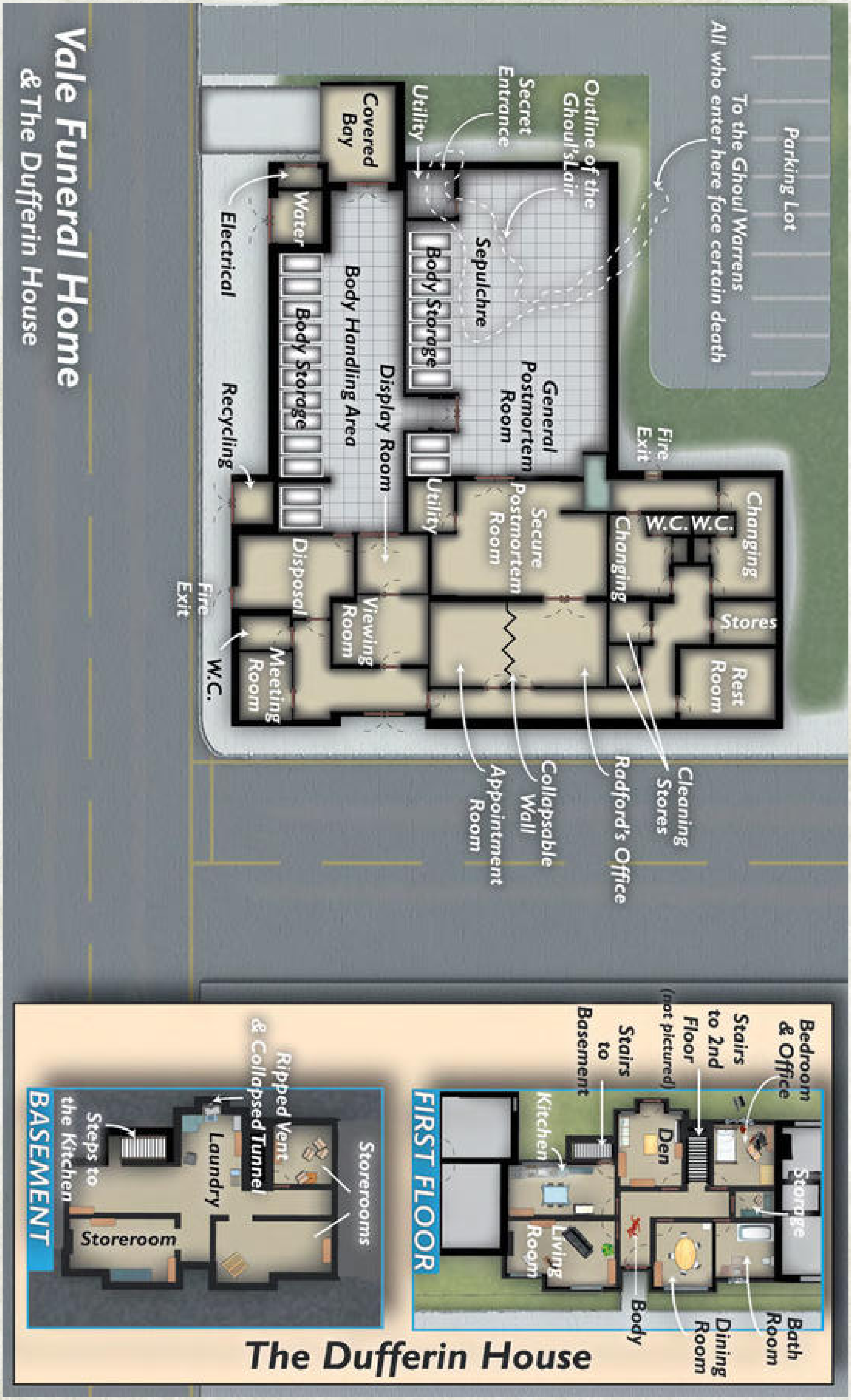
Walter's Final Wish Map


Paddington
the basin, & little venice
Little Venice
Novotel Paddington
Microsoft
Vodafone
VISA
Kingfisher
Sheldon Square
The Prince of Wales Pub
Paddington Station
Westway
City of Westminster College Paddington
Cet Primary School
Merchant Square
(Nurseries, Shops, & Restaurants)
Paddington Basin
St. Mary's Hospital
Hilton Paddington
Hotel Mercure Paddington
Paddington Underground
Imperial College London St. Mary's
Hilton Metropole
Tesco
Hope Montessori Primary School
Paddington Green Police Station
Edgware Road
Edgware Road
0 50 100 150 200 250
Feet
Transport & Services
Shops & Commercial Buildings
Hotels & Apartments
Industrial Buildings
Offices
Schools & Universities
Hospitals & Clinics
Narrowboats
0 1 2 3 4 5
Feet
Bow
Lounge
Galley
Master Bedroom
Bathroom
Study
Closet
2nd Bedroom
Cockpit
Stern
Tiller

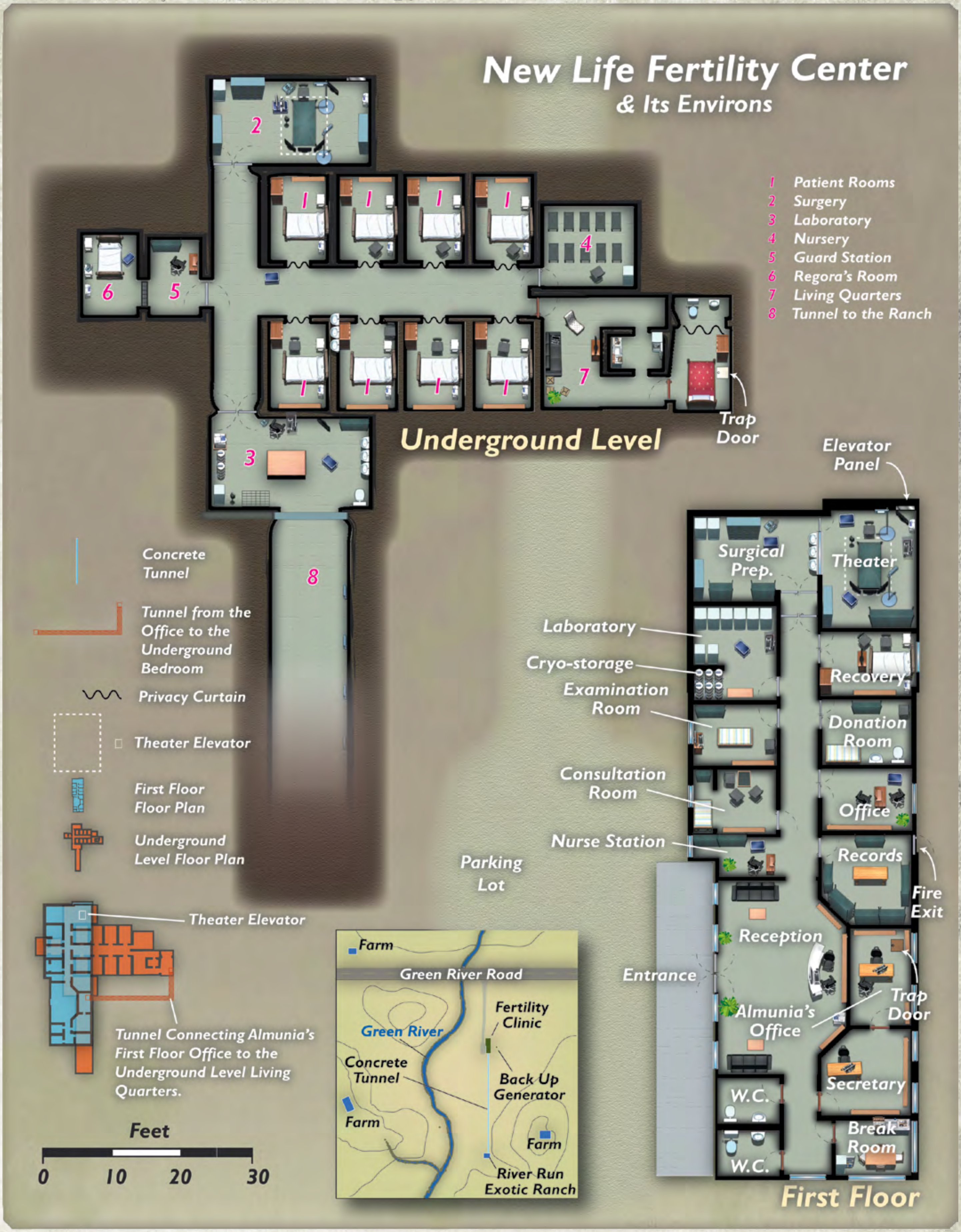
Whose Fuel is Man and Stones Map


1st Floor
Living Room
Stairs to 2nd Floor
Library
Porch
Entrance
Foyer
Hall
Larder
Back Porch
Utility Room
Kitchen
Stairs to Basement
Pantry
Dining Room
2nd Floor
Guest Bedroom
Closet
Stairs to Attic
Bath.
Closet
Study
Landing
Closet
Bath.
Guest Bedroom
Bath.
Master Bedroom
Closet
Stairs to 1st Floor
Basement
Wood & Coal Store
Generator & Fuel Store
Wine Cellar
Stairs to 1st Floor
Food Stores
Furniture Storage
General Storage
The Attic
Stairs to 2nd Floor
Low Ceiling
Walkable Area
Telescope
Ritual Circle
Lectern
Feet
0 5 10 15 20 25
Ophelia's House
near Eagle Lake
First Lake
Second Lake
Soldier Pond
Allagash River
161
Blake Lake
Wallagrass
Wallagrass Lakes
AROOSTOOK COUNTY
Aroostook Road
Ophelia's House
Eagle Lake
Mile
0 1
Eagle Lake
11
Fish River
Dickwood Lake
Eagle Lake, Maine
& its Environs

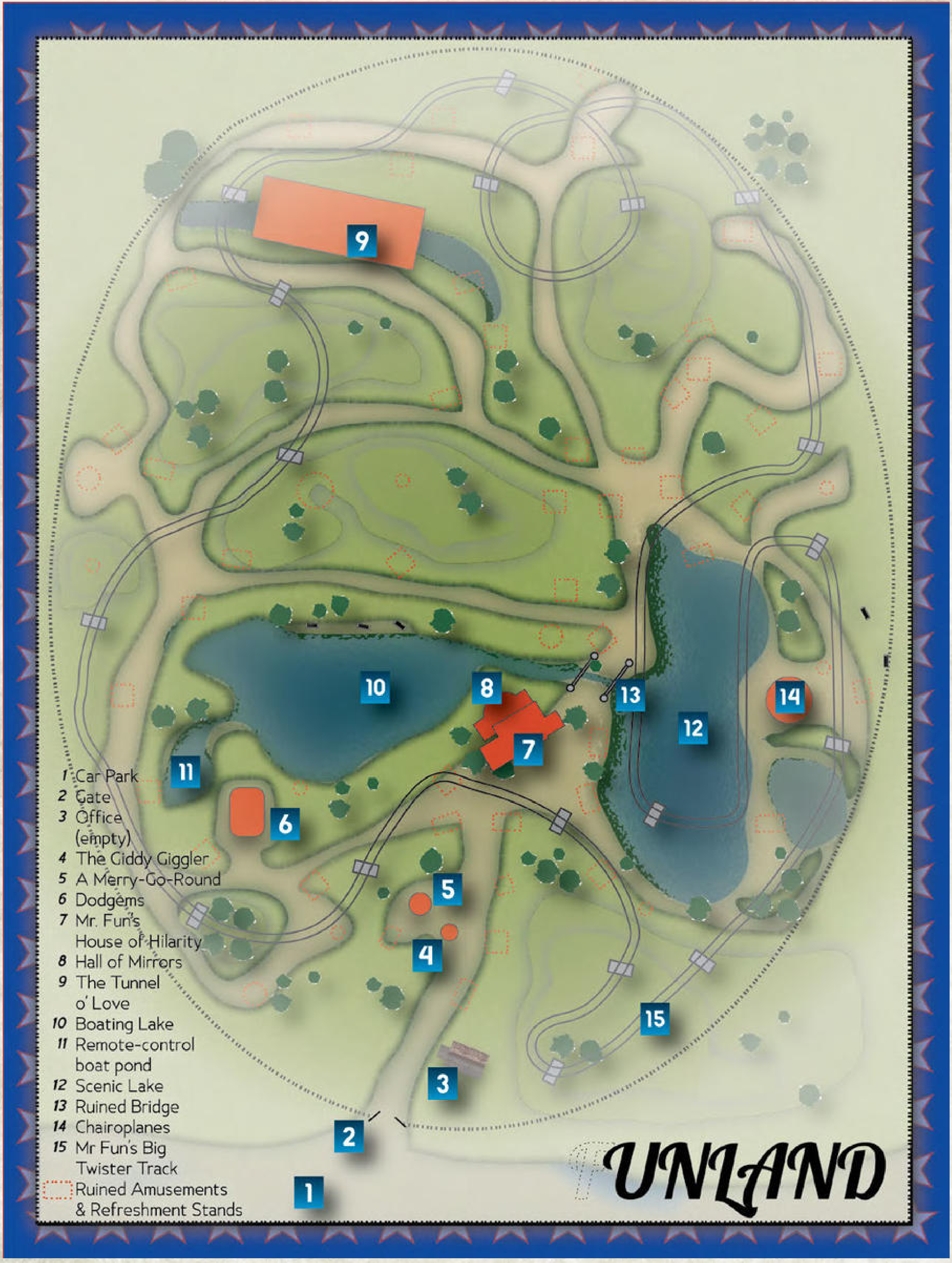
Pulvis et Umbra Sumus Map


Vale Funeral Home
& The Dufferin House
Parking Lot
To the Ghoul Warrens
All who enter here face certain death
Outline of the Ghoul's Lair
Secret Entrance
Utility
Covered Bay
Water
Electrical
Sepulchre
Body Storage
Body Handling Area
Body Storage
General Postmortem Room
Display Room
Recycling
Fire Exit
Utility
Secure Postmortem Room
Changing
W.C. W.C.
Changing
Stores
Rest Room
Disposal
Viewing Room
Fire Exit
W.C.
Meeting Room
Cleaning Stores
Radford's Office
Collapsable Wall
Appointment Room
The Dufferin House
FIRST FLOOR
Bedroom & Office
Stairs to 2nd Floor (not pictured)
Stairs to Basement
Den
Kitchen
Storage
Living Room
Body
Dining Room
Bath Room
BASEMENT
Storerooms
Ripped Vent & Collapsed Tunnel
Laundry
Steps to the Kitchen
Storeroom

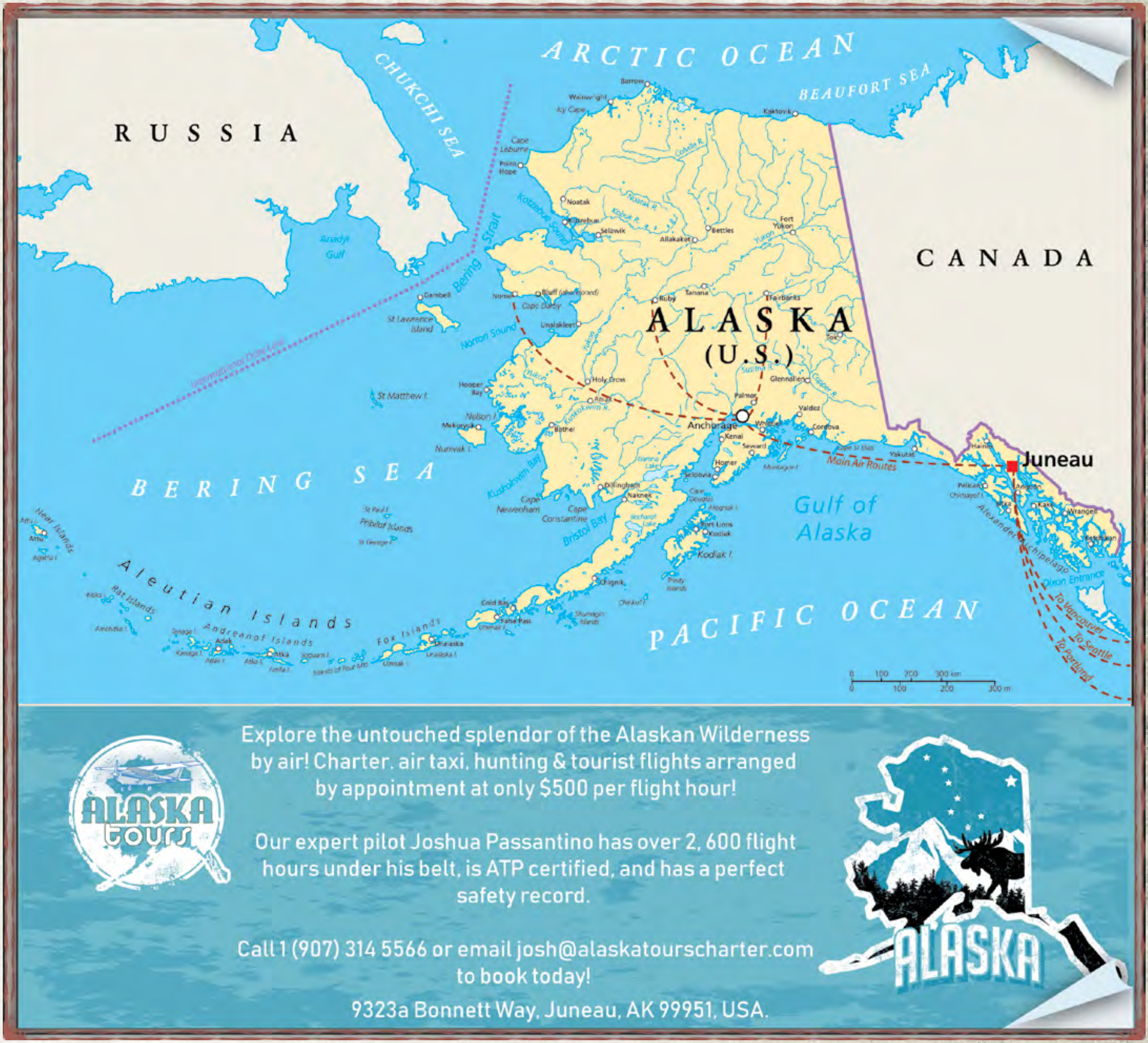
Bone Deep Map


New Life Fertility Center
& Its Environs
1 Patient Rooms
2 Surgery
3 Laboratory
4 Nursery
5 Guard Station
6 Regora's Room
7 Living Quarters
8 Tunnel to the Ranch
Underground Level
Trap Door
Concrete Tunnel
Tunnel from the Office to the Underground Bedroom
Privacy Curtain
Theater Elevator
First Floor Floor Plan
Underground Level Floor Plan
Theater Elevator
Tunnel Connecting Almunia's First Floor Office to the Underground Level Living Quarters.
Feet
0
10
20
30
Parking Lot
Farm
Green River Road
Fertility Clinic
Green River
Concrete Tunnel
Back Up Generator
Farm
Farm
River Run Exotic Ranch
Elevator Panel
Surgical Prep.
Theater
Laboratory
Cryo-storage
Examination Room
Recovery
Donation Room
Consultation Room
Office
Nurse Station
Records
Fire Exit
Reception
Entrance
Almunia's Office
Trap Door
Secretary
W.C.
W.C.
Break Room
First Floor

Waiting to be Born Map


UNLAND
1 Car Park
2 Gate
3 Office (empty)
4 The Giddy Giggler
5 A Merry-Go-Round
6 Dodgems
7 Mr. Fun's House of Hilarity
8 Hall of Mirrors
9 The Tunnel o' Love
10 Boating Lake
11 Remote-control boat pond
12 Scenic Lake
13 Ruined Bridge
14 Chairoplanes
15 Mr Fun's Big Twister Track
⬚ Ruined Amusements & Refreshment Stands

UNLAND Map


ARCTIC OCEAN
BEAUFORT SEA
CHUKCHI SEA
RUSSIA
Anadyr Gulf
Bering Strait
International Date Line
CANADA
ALASKA
(U.S.)
Barrow
Kotzebue Sound
Norton Sound
St Lawrence Island
St Matthew I.
Nunivak I.
Kuskokwim Bay
Bristol Bay
Pribilof Islands
Fairbanks
Anchorage
Juneau
Main Air Routes
Gulf of Alaska
Kodiak I.
BERING SEA
Near Islands
Rat Islands
Aleutian Islands
Andreanof Islands
Fox Islands
PACIFIC OCEAN
Alexander Archipelago
Dixon Entrance
To Vancouver
To Seattle
To Portland
0 100 200 300 km
0 100 200 300 m
ALASKA tours
ALASKA

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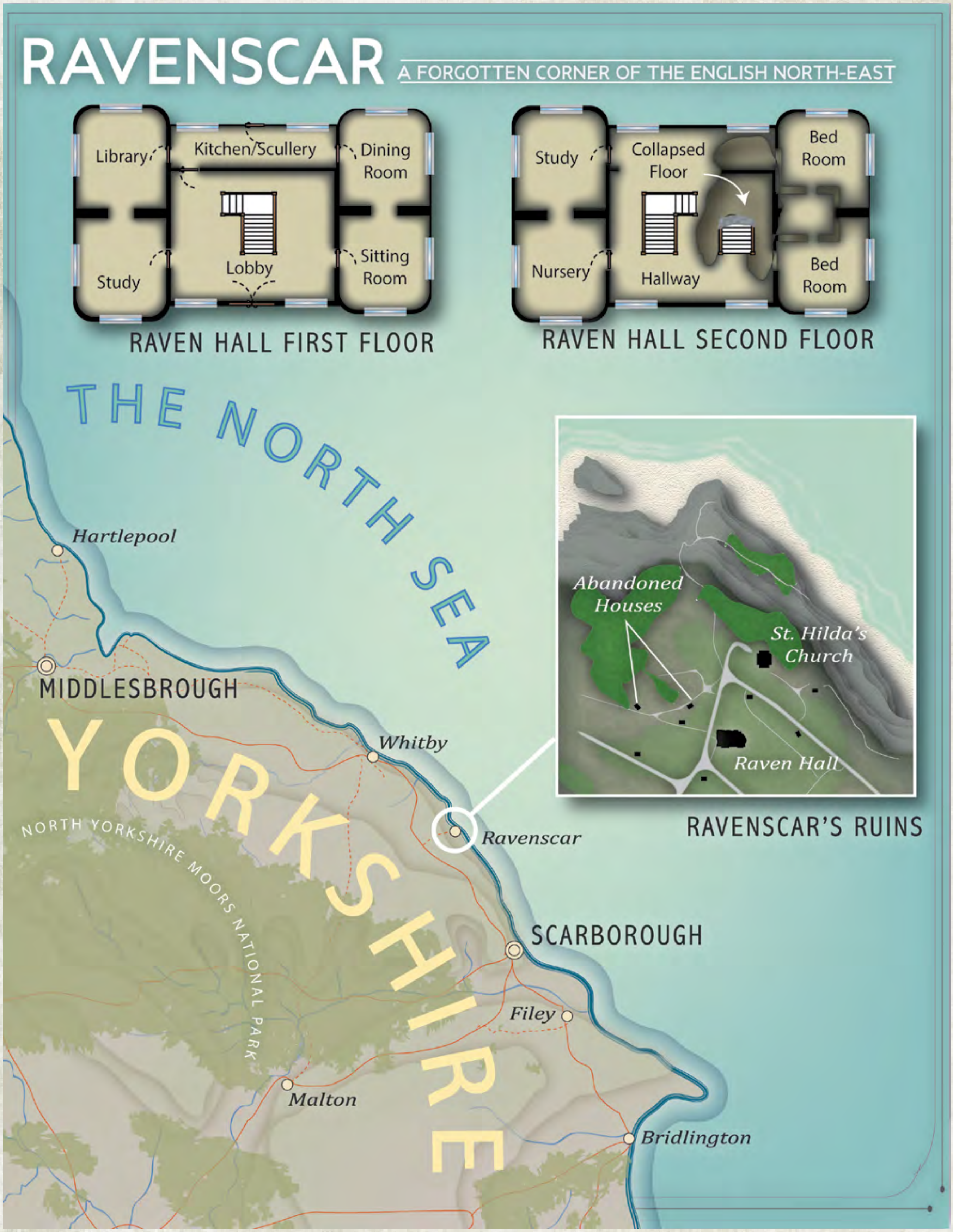
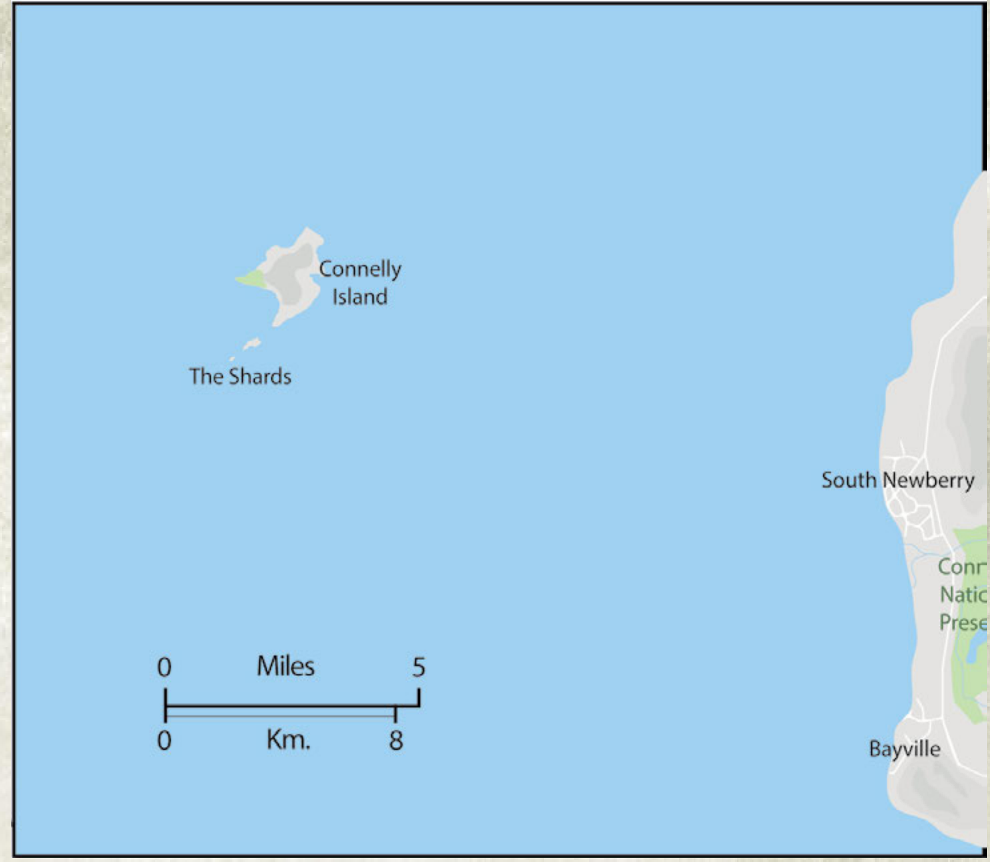
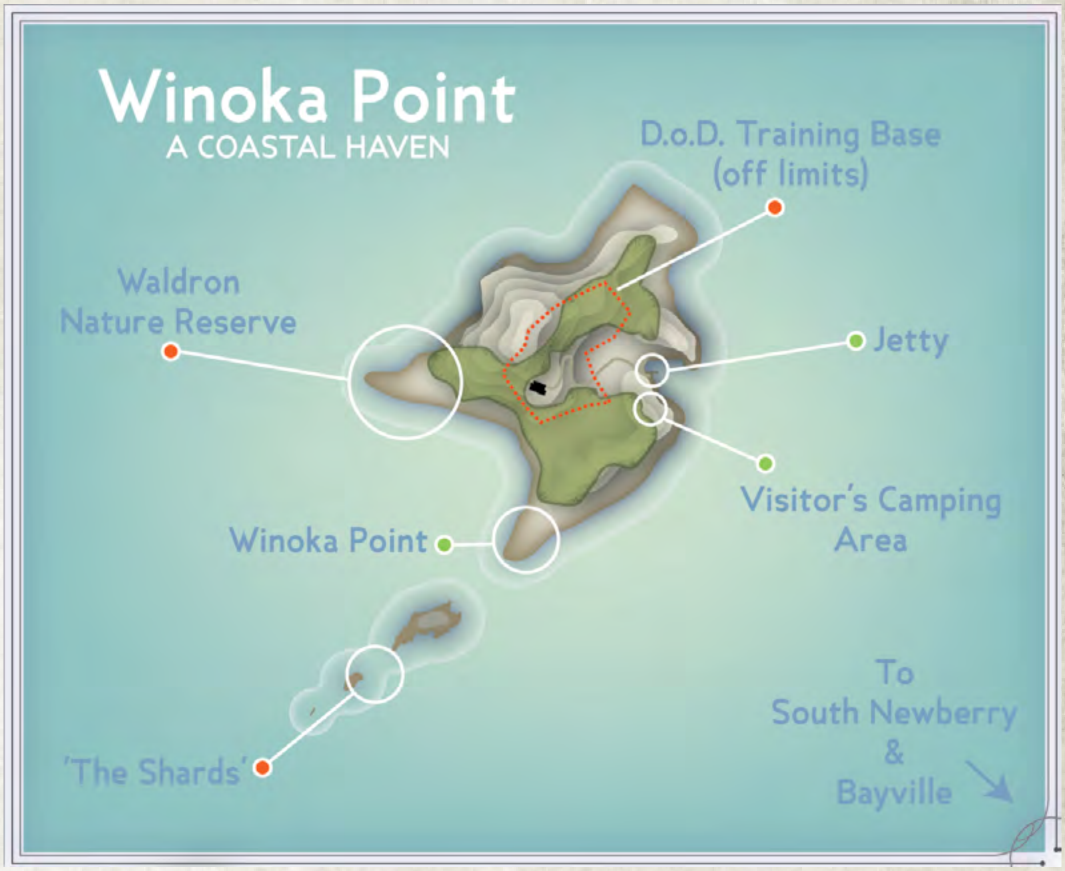
Dissociation Map


RAVENSCAR
A FORGOTTEN CORNER OF THE ENGLISH NORTH-EAST
Library
Kitchen/Scullery
Dining Room
Study
Lobby
Sitting Room
RAVEN HALL FIRST FLOOR
Study
Collapsed Floor
Bed Room
Nursery
Hallway
Bed Room
RAVEN HALL SECOND FLOOR
THE NORTH SEA
Abandoned Houses
St. Hilda's Church
Raven Hall
RAVENSCAR'S RUINS
Hartlepool
MIDDLESBROUGH
YORKSHIRE
Whitby
Ravenscar
NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS NATIONAL PARK
SCARBOROUGH
Filey
Malton
Bridlington

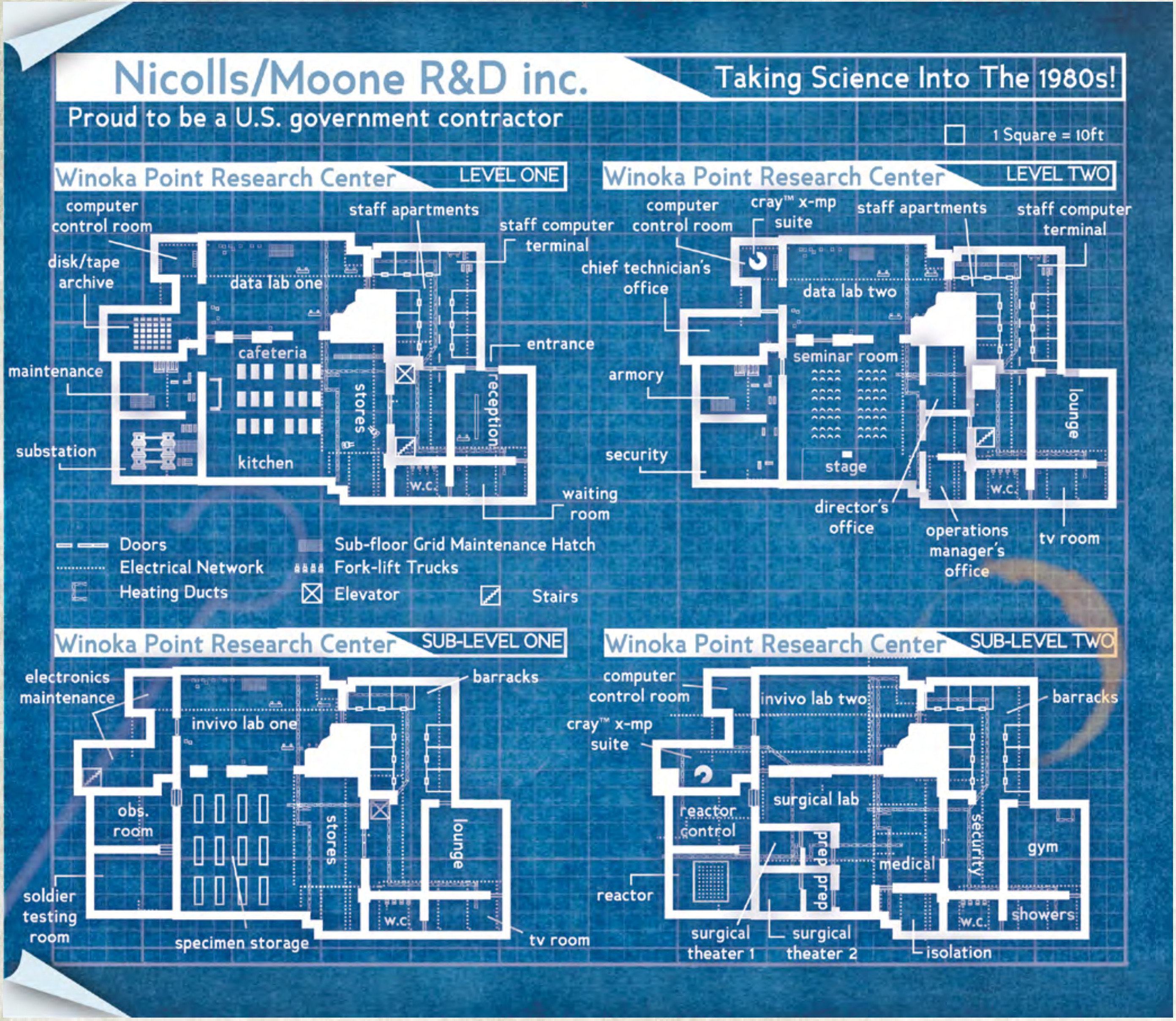
Ghosts of Ravenscar Map


Connelly
Island
The Shards
South Newberry
Conr
Natic
Prese
Bayville
0
Miles
5
0
Km.
8

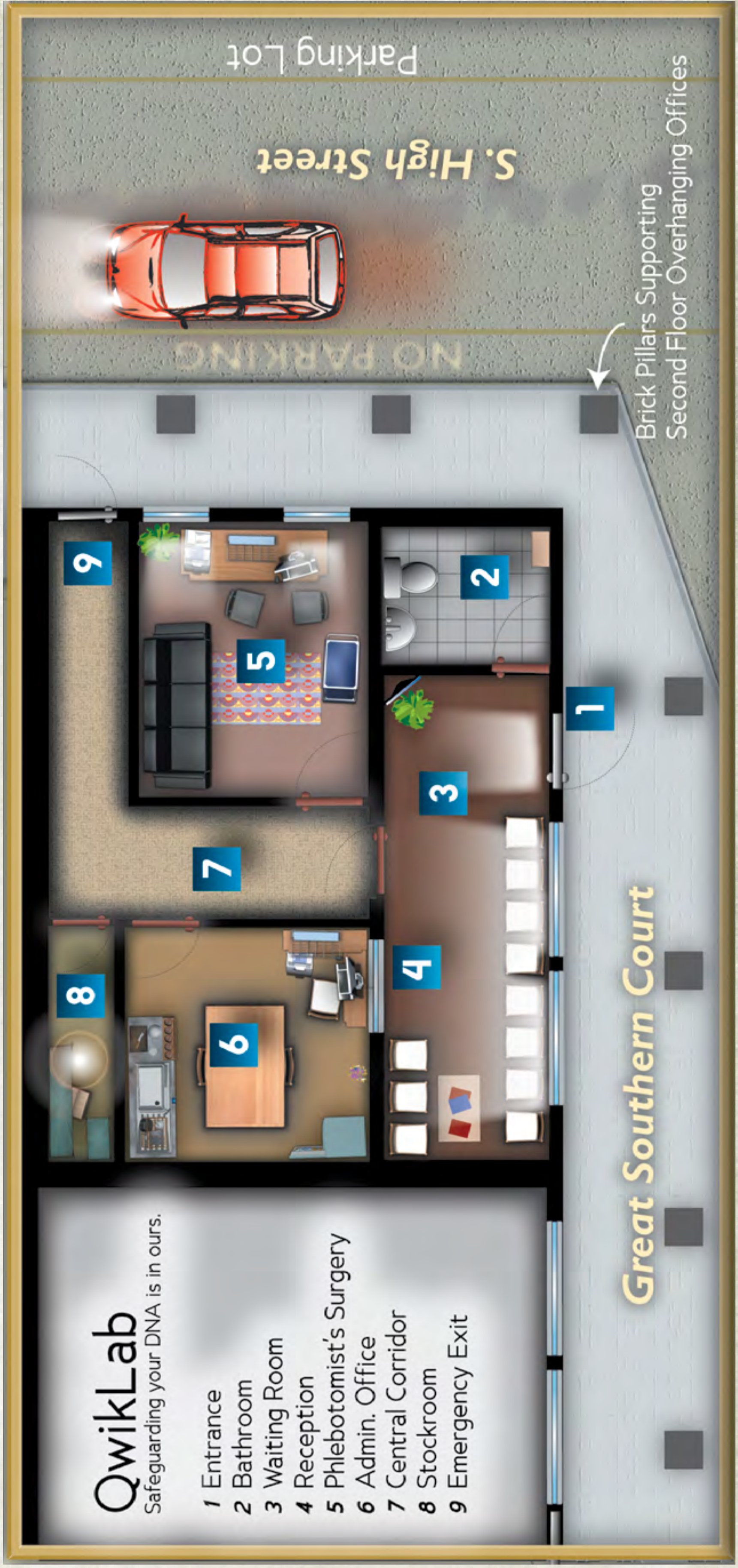
The Winoka Point Research Center Map #1


Winoka Point
A COASTAL HAVEN
D.o.D. Training Base
(off limits)
Waldron
Nature Reserve
Jetty
Visitor's Camping
Area
Winoka Point
'The Shards'
To
South Newberry
&
Bayville

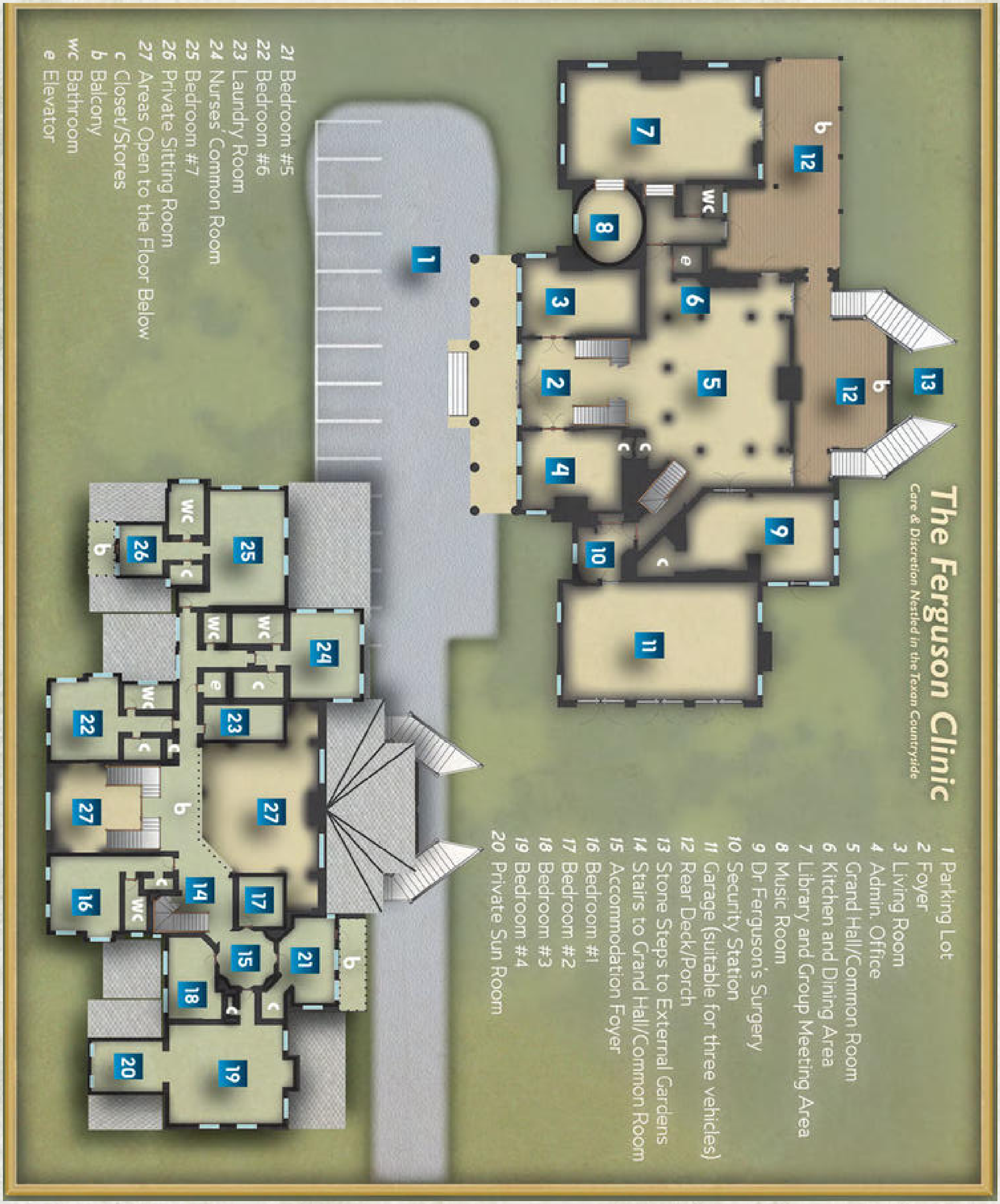
The Winoka Point Research Center Map #2


Nicolls/Moone R&D inc.
Taking Science Into The 1980s!
Proud to be a U.S. government contractor
1 Square = 10ft
Winoka Point Research Center LEVEL ONE
computer control room
disk/tape archive
maintenance
substation
data lab one
cafeteria
kitchen
stores
staff apartments
staff computer terminal
entrance
reception
w.c.
waiting room
Winoka Point Research Center LEVEL TWO
computer control room
cray™ x-mp suite
chief technician's office
armory
security
data lab two
seminar room
stage
director's office
staff apartments
staff computer terminal
lounge
w.c.
operations manager's office
tv room
Doors
Electrical Network
Heating Ducts
Sub-floor Grid Maintenance Hatch
Fork-lift Trucks
Elevator
Stairs
Winoka Point Research Center SUB-LEVEL ONE
electronics maintenance
invivo lab one
obs. room
soldier testing room
specimen storage
stores
barracks
lounge
w.c.
tv room
Winoka Point Research Center SUB-LEVEL TWO
computer control room
cray™ x-mp suite
invivo lab two
surgical lab
reactor control
reactor
prep
prep
surgical theater 1
surgical theater 2
medical
security
barracks
gym
w.c.
showers
isolation

The Winoka Point Research Center Map #3

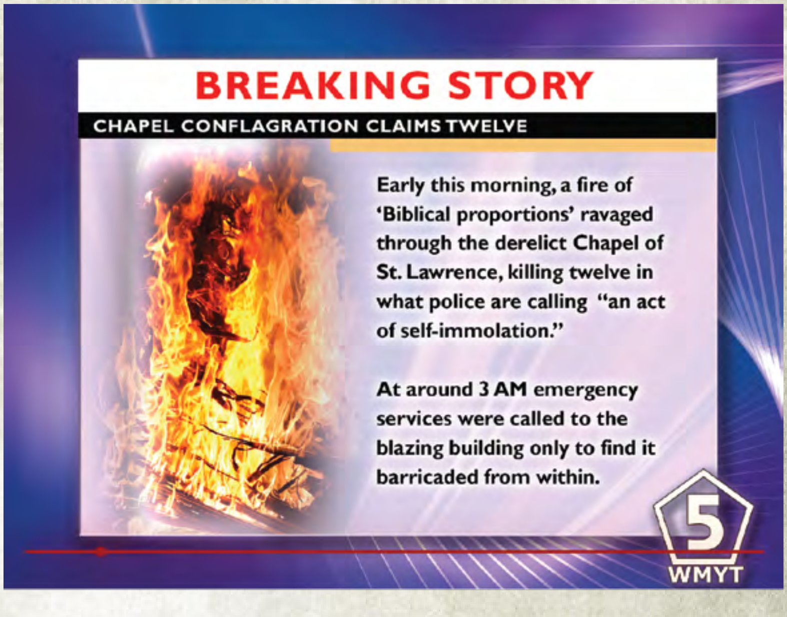

Parking Lot
S. High Street
NO PARKING
Brick Pillars Supporting Second Floor Overhanging Offices
Great Southern Court
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
QwikLab
Safeguarding your DNA is in ours.
1 Entrance
2 Bathroom
3 Waiting Room
4 Reception
5 Phlebotomist's Surgery
6 Admin. Office
7 Central Corridor
8 Stockroom
9 Emergency Exit

Phlebotomy Map #1


The Ferguson Clinic
Care & Discretion Nestled in the Texan Countryside
1 Parking Lot
2 Foyer
3 Living Room
4 Admin. Office
5 Grand Hall/Common Room
6 Kitchen and Dining Area
7 Library and Group Meeting Area
8 Music Room
9 Dr Ferguson's Surgery
10 Security Station
11 Garage (suitable for three vehicles)
12 Rear Deck/Porch
13 Stone Steps to External Gardens
14 Stairs to Grand Hall/Common Room
15 Accommodation Foyer
16 Bedroom #1
17 Bedroom #2
18 Bedroom #3
19 Bedroom #4
20 Private Sun Room
21 Bedroom #5
22 Bedroom #6
23 Laundry Room
24 Nurses' Common Room
25 Bedroom #7
26 Private Sitting Room
27 Areas Open to the Floor Below
c Closet/Stores
b Balcony
wc Bathroom
e Elevator

Phlebotomy Map #2

Lights Out Investigator Handout #1

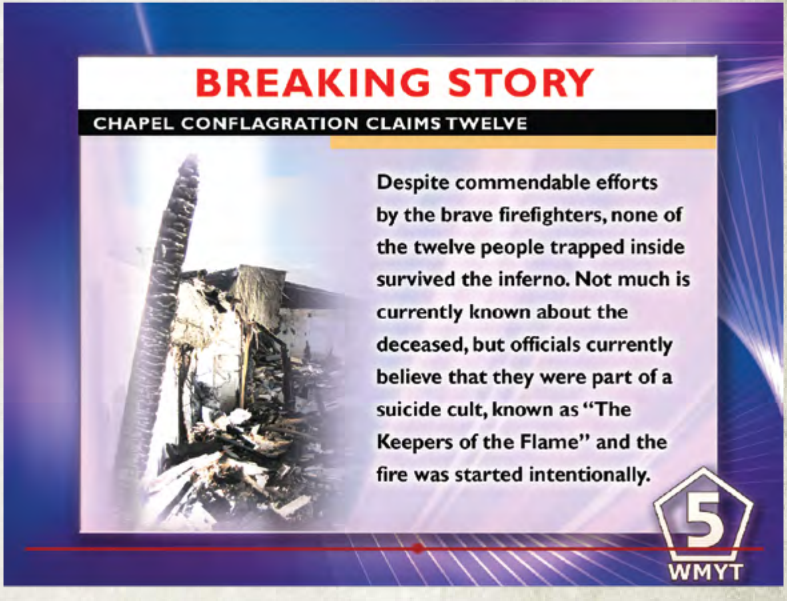


BREAKING STORY

CHAPEL CONFLAGRATION CLAIMS TWELVE

Early this morning, a fire of 'Biblical proportions' ravaged through the derelict Chapel of St. Lawrence, killing twelve in what police are calling "an act of self-immolation."

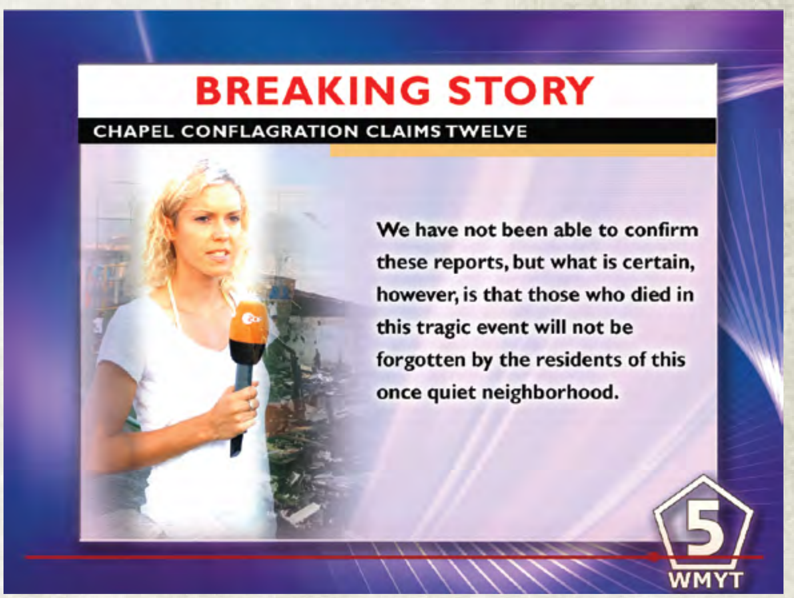
At around 3 AM emergency services were called to the blazing building only to find it barricaded from within.



BREAKING STORY

CHAPEL CONFLAGRATION CLAIMS TWELVE

Despite commendable efforts by the brave firefighters, none of the twelve people trapped inside survived the inferno. Not much is currently known about the deceased, but officials currently believe that they were part of a suicide cult, known as "The Keepers of the Flame" and the fire was started intentionally.

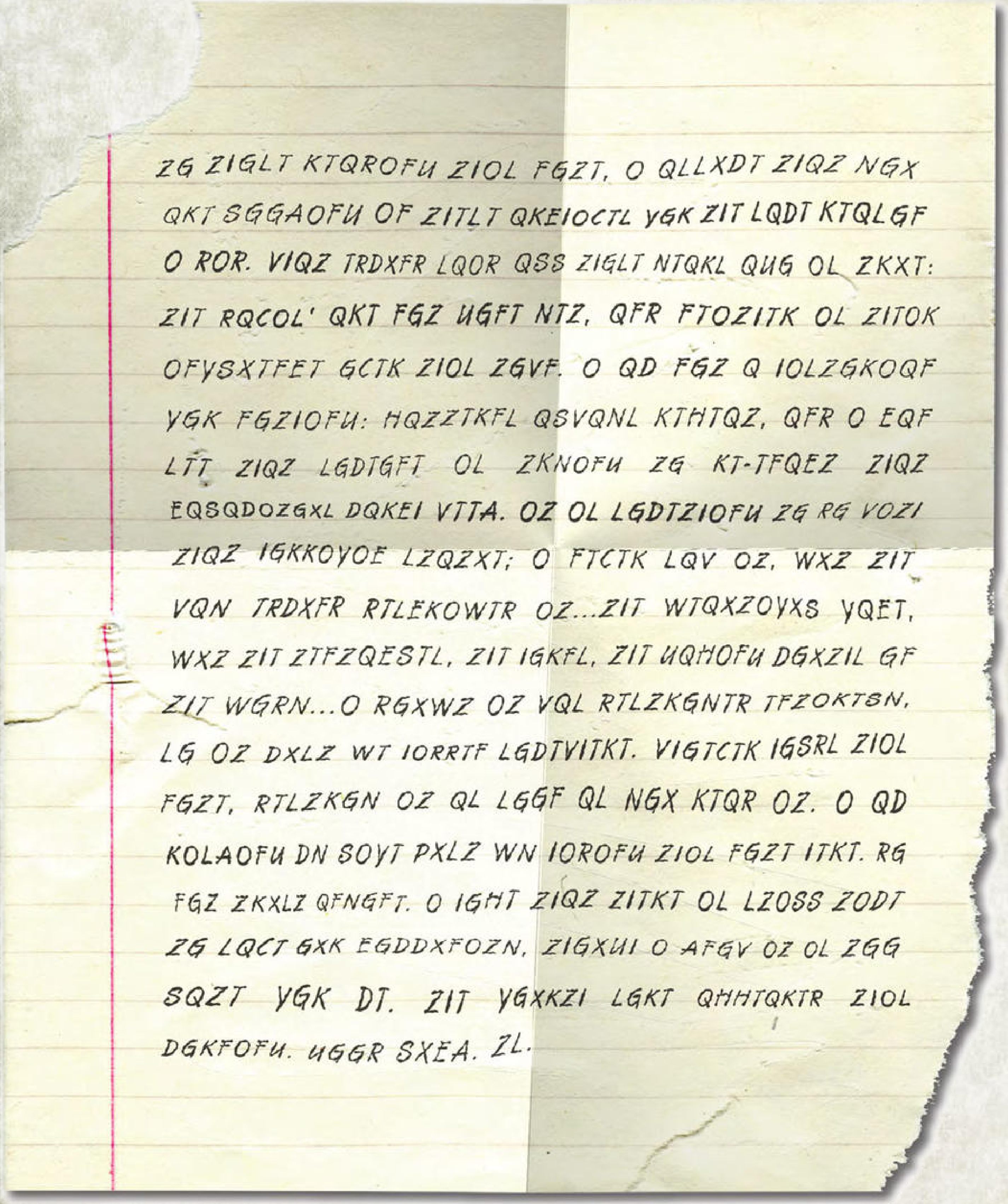


BREAKING STORY

CHAPEL CONFLAGRATION CLAIMS TWELVE

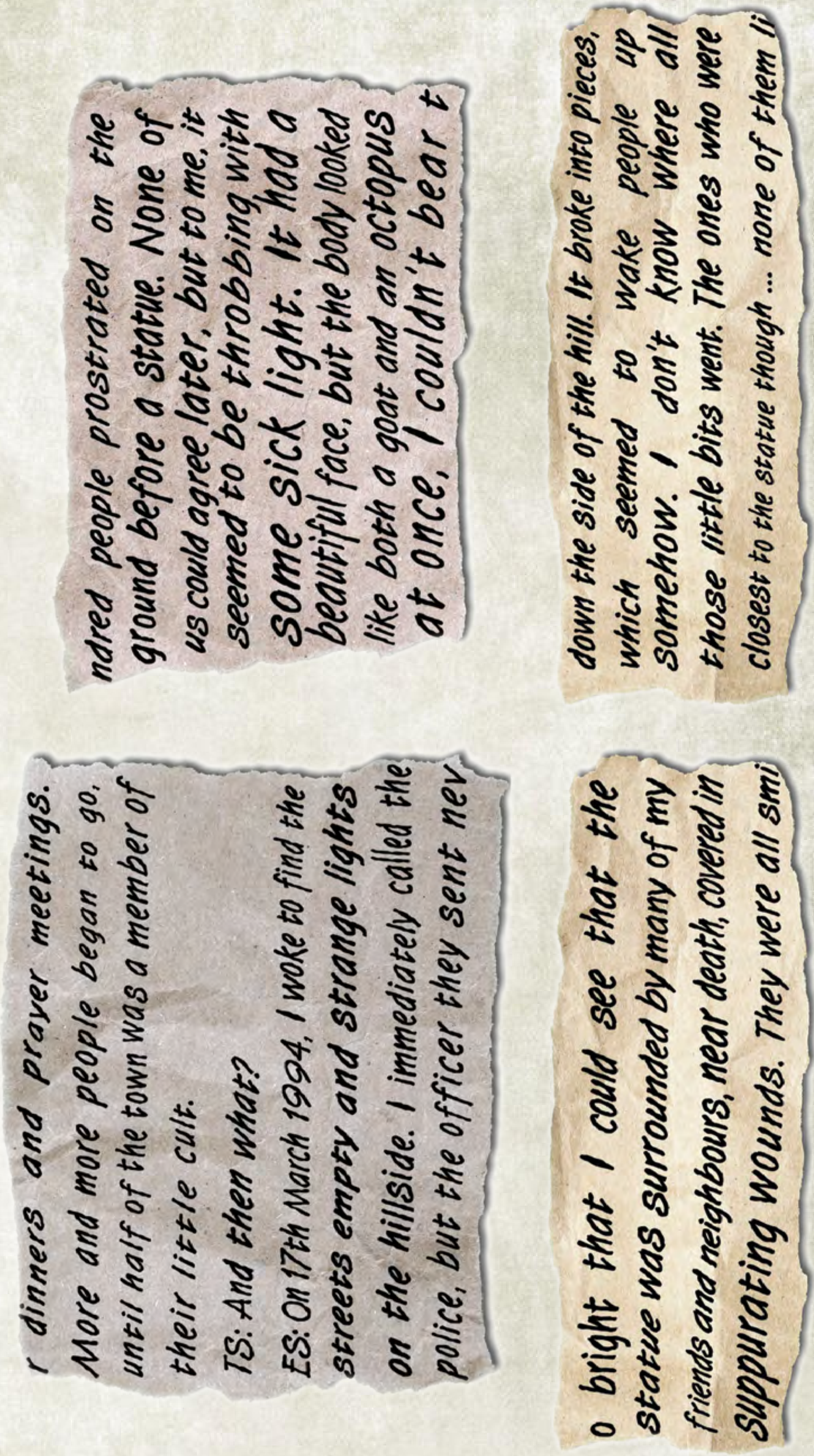
We have not been able to confirm these reports, but what is certain, however, is that those who died in this tragic event will not be forgotten by the residents of this once quiet neighborhood.

The Sores Investigator Handout #1



ZG ZIGLT KTQROFU ZIOL FGZT, O QLLXDT ZIQZ NGX
QKT SGGAOFU OF ZITLT QKEIOCTL YGK ZIT LQDT KTQLGF
O ROR. VIQZ TRDXFR LQOR QSS ZIGLT NTQKL QUG OL ZKXT:
ZIT RQCOL' QKT FGZ UGFT NTZ, QFR FTOZITK OL ZITOK
OFYSXTFET GCTK ZIOL ZGVF. O QD FGZ Q IOLZGKOQF
YGK FGZIOFU: HQZZTKFL QSVQNL KTHTQZ, QFR O EQF
LTT ZIQZ LGDTGFT OL ZKNOFU ZG KT-TFQEZ ZIQZ
EQSQDOZGXL DQKEI VTTA. OZ OL LGDTZIOFU ZG RG VOZI
ZIQZ IGKKOYOE LZQZXT; O FTCTK LQV OZ, WXZ ZIT
VQN TRDXFR RTLEKOWTR OZ...ZIT WTQXZOYXS YQET,
WXZ ZIT ZTFZQESTL, ZIT IGKFL, ZIT UQHOFU DGXZIL GF
ZIT WGRN...O RGXWZ OZ VQL RTLZKGNTR TFZOKTSN,
LG OZ DXLZ WT IORRTF LGDTVITKT. VIGTCTK IGSRL ZIOL
FGZT, RTLZKGN OZ QL LGGF QL NGX KTQR OZ. O QD
KOLAOFU DN SOYT PXLZ WN IOROFU ZIOL FGZT ITKT. RG
FGZ ZKXLZ QFNGFT. O IGHT ZIQZ ZITKT OL LZOSS ZODT
ZG LQCT GXK EGDDXFOZN, ZIGXUI O AFGV OZ OL ZGG
SQZT YGK DT. ZIT YGXKZI LGKT QHHTQKTR ZIOL
DGKFOFU. UGGR SXEA. ZL.

The Sores Investigator Handout #2



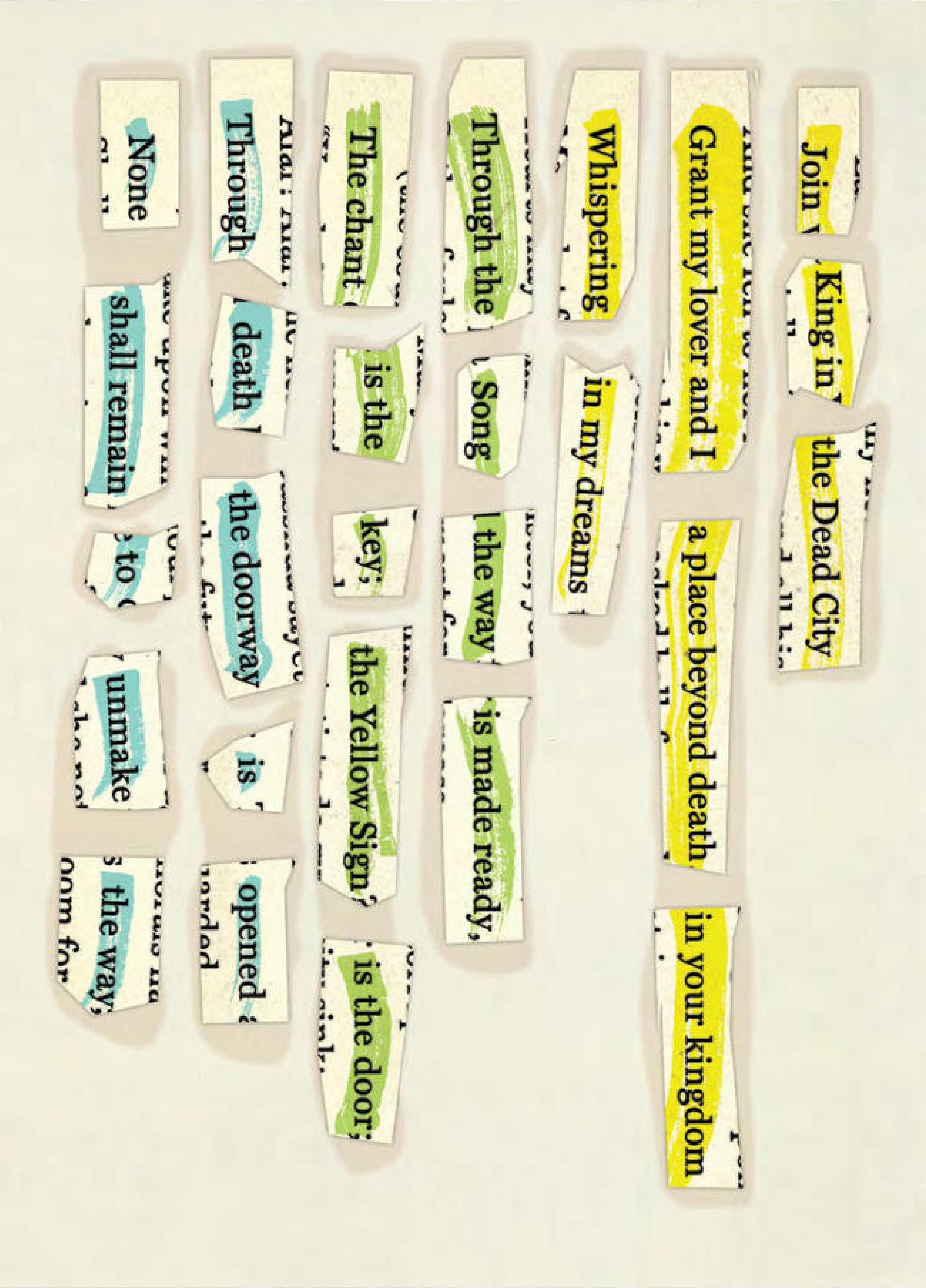
r dinners and prayer meetings.
More and more people began to go,
until half of the town was a member of
their little cult.
TS: And then what?
ES: On 17th March 1994, I woke to find the
streets empty and strange lights
on the hillside. I immediately called the
police, but the officer they sent nev

ndred people prostrated on the
ground before a statue. None of
us could agree later, but to me, it
seemed to be throbbing with
some sick light. It had a
beautiful face, but the body looked
like both a goat and an octopus
at once, I couldn't bear t

o bright that I could see that the
statue was surrounded by many of my
friends and neighbours, near death, covered in
suppurating wounds. They were all smi

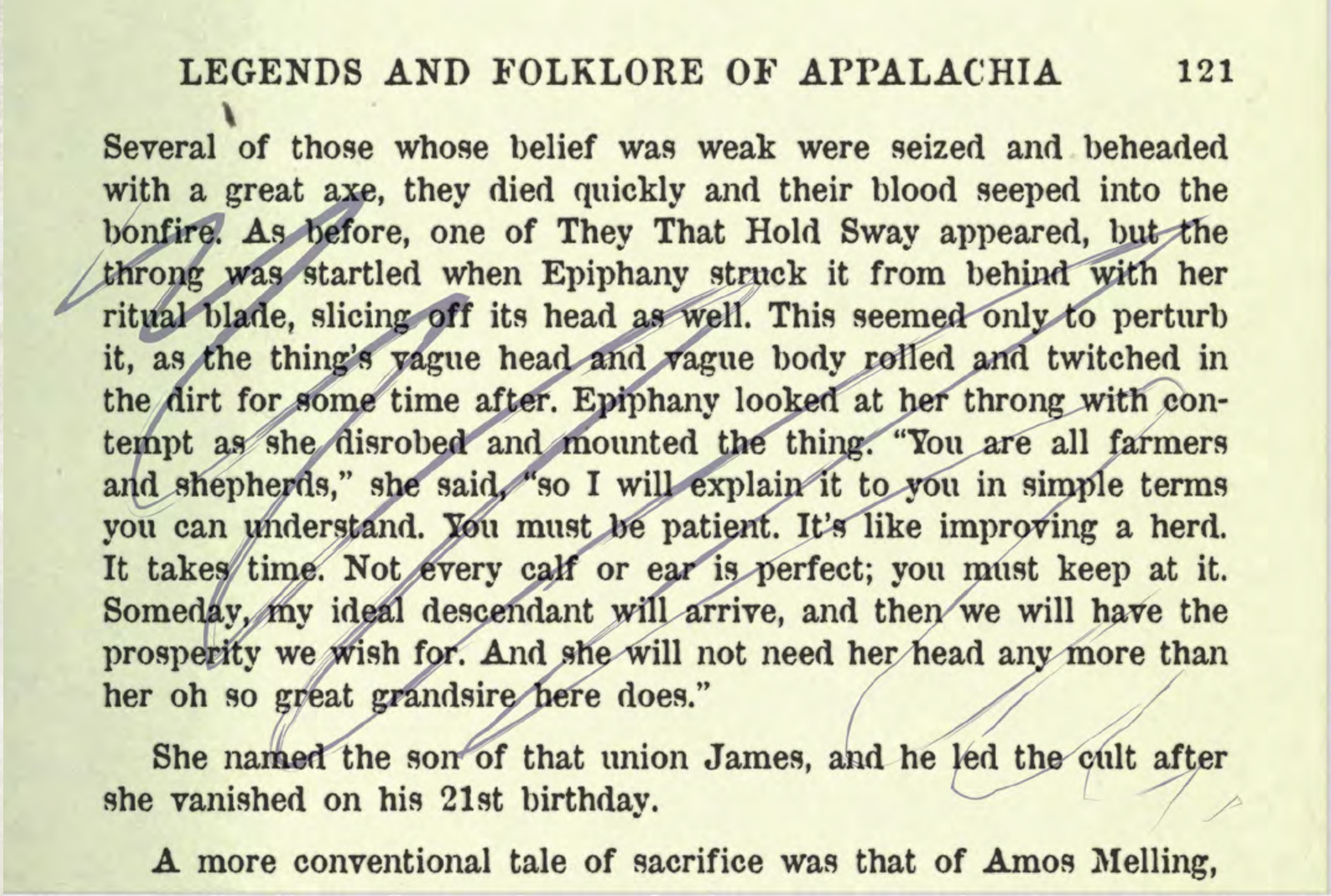
down the side of the hill. It broke into pieces,
which seemed to wake people up
somehow. I don't know where all
those little bits went. The ones who were
closest to the statue though ... none of them li

Poetry Night Investigator Handout #1



Join King in the Dead City
Grant my lover and I a place beyond death in your kingdom
Whispering in my dreams
Through the Song the way is made ready,
The chant is the key; the Yellow Sign is the door;
Through death the doorway is opened
None shall remain to unmake the way,

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #1



LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE OF APPALACHIA 121

Several of those whose belief was weak were seized and beheaded with a great axe, they died quickly and their blood seeped into the bonfire. As before, one of They That Hold Sway appeared, but the throng was startled when Epiphany struck it from behind with her ritual blade, slicing off its head as well. This seemed only to perturb it, as the thing's vague head and vague body rolled and twitched in the dirt for some time after. Epiphany looked at her throng with contempt as she disrobed and mounted the thing. "You are all farmers and shepherds," she said, "so I will explain it to you in simple terms you can understand. You must be patient. It's like improving a herd. It takes time. Not every calf or ear is perfect; you must keep at it. Someday, my ideal descendant will arrive, and then we will have the prosperity we wish for. And she will not need her head any more than her oh so great grandsire here does."

She named the son of that union James, and he led the cult after she vanished on his 21st birthday.

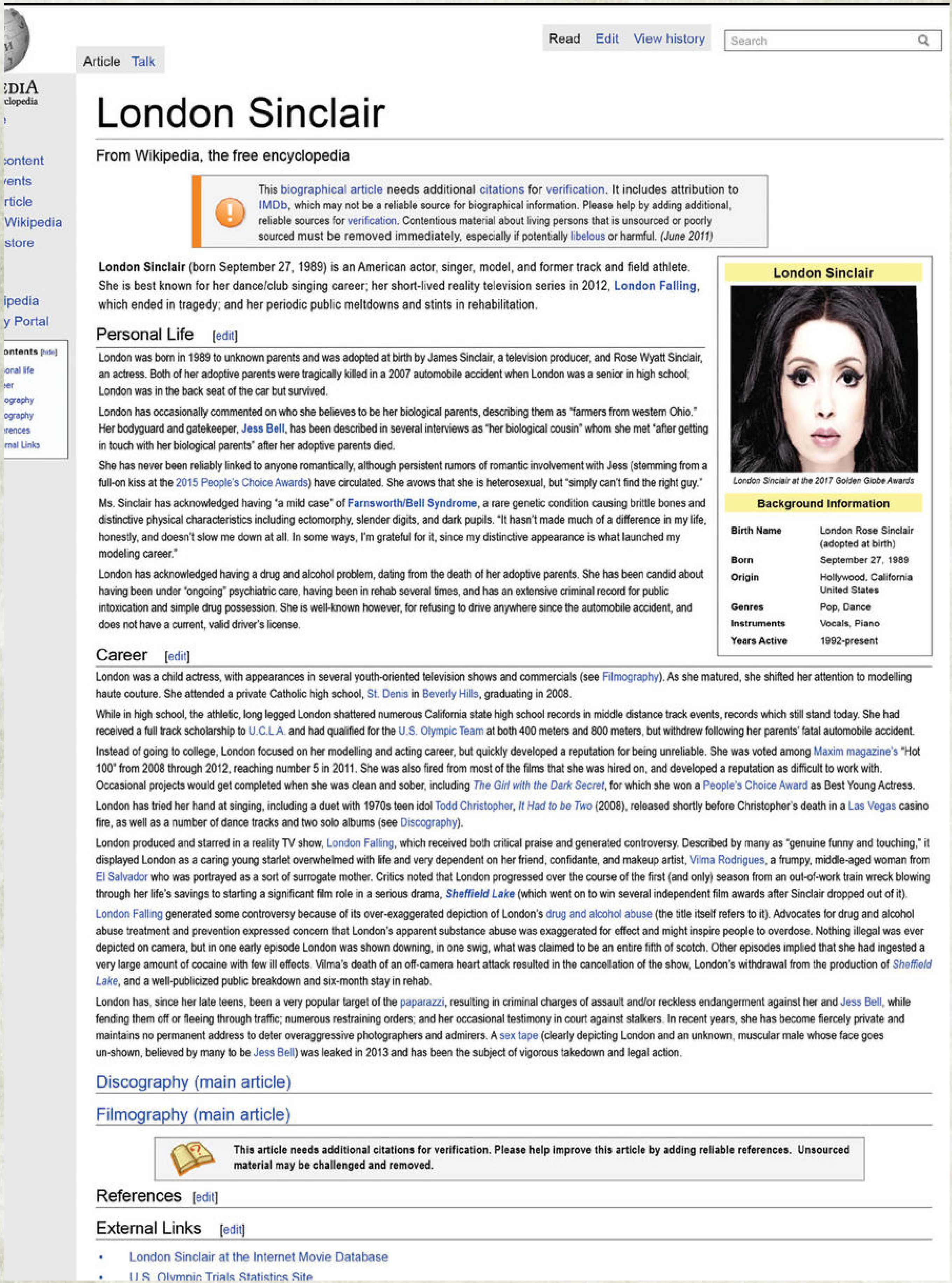
A more conventional tale of sacrifice was that of Amos Melling,

PHLEBOTOMY INVESTIGATOR HANDOUT #3

A SYNOPSIS OF THE SEX TAPE (FULL VERSION)

This is a 3-minute-long film depicting London Sinclair (fully nude and apparently extremely intoxicated) engaged in a series of sex acts with a tall, muscular male whose face is blurred out. London is actively engaged but seems bored by the whole thing. London is checking her pink, glitter covered cell phone intermittently. The man is muttering something in a deep, guttural, sing-song, unintelligible language. There is something extremely unsettling about the sounds being made by the male. At the end of the tape, London says, "Hey, !@$^(*, I don't know what all that stupid jibber-jabber is, but if you don't knock that @#$% off, you're done."

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #2



London Sinclair

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

> This biographical article needs additional citations for verification. It includes attribution to IMDb, which may not be a reliable source for biographical information. Please help by adding additional, reliable sources for verification. Contentious material about living persons that is unsourced or poorly sourced must be removed immediately, especially if potentially libelous or harmful. *(June 2011)*

London Sinclair	
London Sinclair at the 2017 Golden Globe Awards	
Background Information	
Birth Name	London Rose Sinclair (adopted at birth)
Born	September 27, 1989
Origin	Hollywood, California United States
Genres	Pop, Dance
Instruments	Vocals, Piano
Years Active	1992-present

London Sinclair (born September 27, 1989) is an American actor, singer, model, and former track and field athlete. She is best known for her dance/club singing career; her short-lived reality television series in 2012, **London Falling**, which ended in tragedy; and her periodic public meltdowns and stints in rehabilitation.

Personal Life [edit]

London was born in 1989 to unknown parents and was adopted at birth by James Sinclair, a television producer, and Rose Wyatt Sinclair, an actress. Both of her adoptive parents were tragically killed in a 2007 automobile accident when London was a senior in high school; London was in the back seat of the car but survived.

London has occasionally commented on who she believes to be her biological parents, describing them as "farmers from western Ohio." Her bodyguard and gatekeeper, **Jess Bell**, has been described in several interviews as "her biological cousin" whom she met "after getting in touch with her biological parents" after her adoptive parents died.

She has never been reliably linked to anyone romantically, although persistent rumors of romantic involvement with Jess (stemming from a full-on kiss at the 2015 People's Choice Awards) have circulated. She avows that she is heterosexual, but "simply can't find the right guy."

Ms. Sinclair has acknowledged having "a mild case" of **Farnsworth/Bell Syndrome**, a rare genetic condition causing brittle bones and distinctive physical characteristics including ectomorphy, slender digits, and dark pupils. "It hasn't made much of a difference in my life, honestly, and doesn't slow me down at all. In some ways, I'm grateful for it, since my distinctive appearance is what launched my modeling career."

London has acknowledged having a drug and alcohol problem, dating from the death of her adoptive parents. She has been candid about having been under "ongoing" psychiatric care, having been in rehab several times, and has an extensive criminal record for public intoxication and simple drug possession. She is well-known however, for refusing to drive anywhere since the automobile accident, and does not have a current, valid driver's license.

Career [edit]

London was a child actress, with appearances in several youth-oriented television shows and commercials (see Filmography). As she matured, she shifted her attention to modelling haute couture. She attended a private Catholic high school, St. Denis in Beverly Hills, graduating in 2008.

While in high school, the athletic, long legged London shattered numerous California state high school records in middle distance track events, records which still stand today. She had received a full track scholarship to U.C.L.A. and had qualified for the U.S. Olympic Team at both 400 meters and 800 meters, but withdrew following her parents' fatal automobile accident.

Instead of going to college, London focused on her modelling and acting career, but quickly developed a reputation for being unreliable. She was voted among Maxim magazine's "Hot 100" from 2008 through 2012, reaching number 5 in 2011. She was also fired from most of the films that she was hired on, and developed a reputation as difficult to work with. Occasional projects would get completed when she was clean and sober, including *The Girl with the Dark Secret*, for which she won a People's Choice Award as Best Young Actress.

London has tried her hand at singing, including a duet with 1970s teen idol Todd Christopher, *It Had to be Two* (2008), released shortly before Christopher's death in a Las Vegas casino fire, as well as a number of dance tracks and two solo albums (see Discography).

London produced and starred in a reality TV show, London Falling, which received both critical praise and generated controversy. Described by many as "genuine funny and touching," it displayed London as a caring young starlet overwhelmed with life and very dependent on her friend, confidante, and makeup artist, Vilma Rodrigues, a frumpy, middle-aged woman from El Salvador who was portrayed as a sort of surrogate mother. Critics noted that London progressed over the course of the first (and only) season from an out-of-work train wreck blowing through her life's savings to starting a significant film role in a serious drama, ***Sheffield Lake*** (which went on to win several independent film awards after Sinclair dropped out of it).

London Falling generated some controversy because of its over-exaggerated depiction of London's drug and alcohol abuse (the title itself refers to it). Advocates for drug and alcohol abuse treatment and prevention expressed concern that London's apparent substance abuse was exaggerated for effect and might inspire people to overdose. Nothing illegal was ever depicted on camera, but in one early episode London was shown downing, in one swig, what was claimed to be an entire fifth of scotch. Other episodes implied that she had ingested a very large amount of cocaine with few ill effects. Vilma's death of an off-camera heart attack resulted in the cancellation of the show, London's withdrawal from the production of *Sheffield Lake*, and a well-publicized public breakdown and six-month stay in rehab.

London has, since her late teens, been a very popular target of the paparazzi, resulting in criminal charges of assault and/or reckless endangerment against her and Jess Bell, while fending them off or fleeing through traffic; numerous restraining orders; and her occasional testimony in court against stalkers. In recent years, she has become fiercely private and maintains no permanent address to deter overaggressive photographers and admirers. A sex tape (clearly depicting London and an unknown, muscular male whose face goes un-shown, believed by many to be Jess Bell) was leaked in 2013 and has been the subject of vigorous takedown and legal action.

Discography (main article)

Filmography (main article)

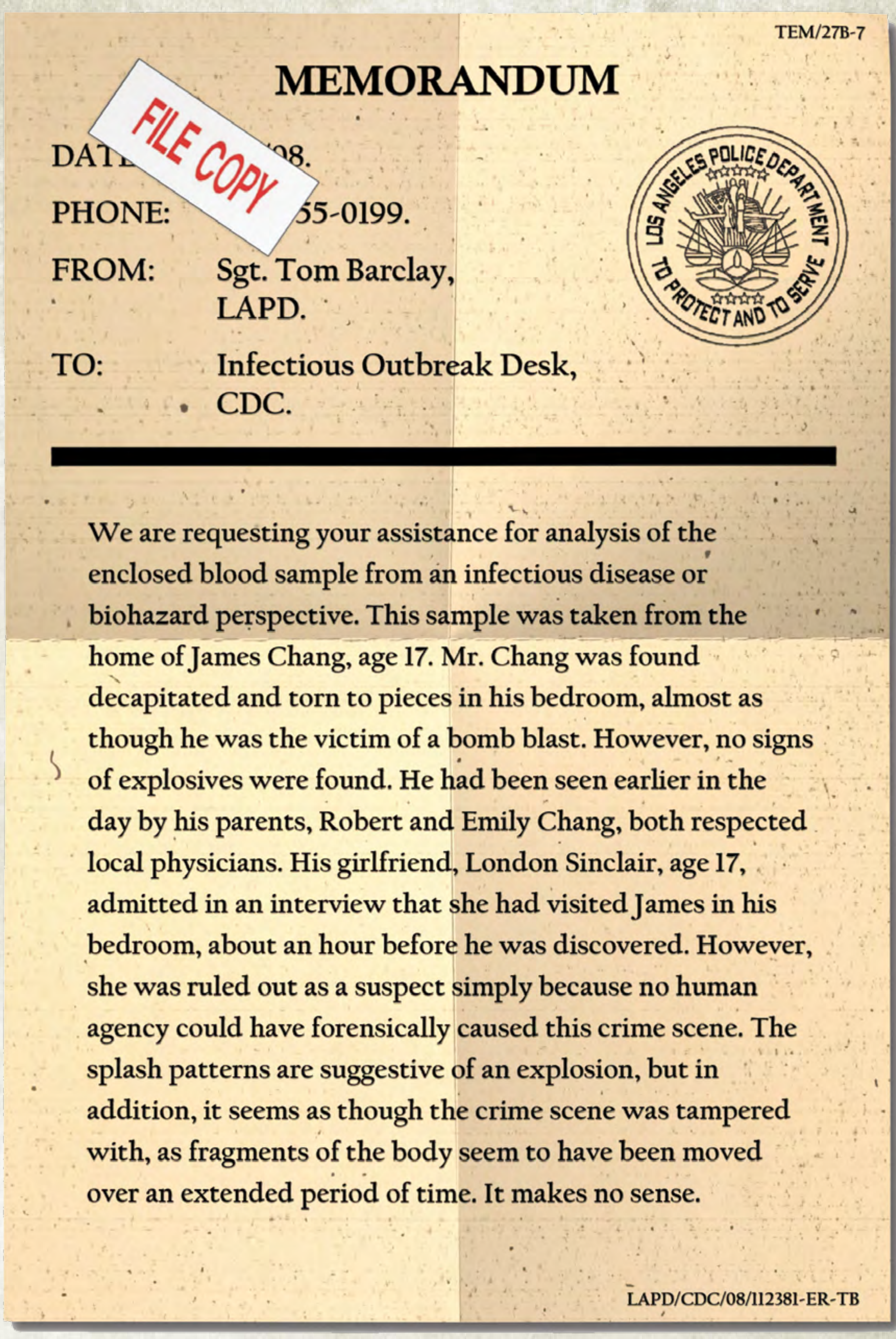
> **This article needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding reliable references. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.**

References [edit]

External Links [edit]

- London Sinclair at the Internet Movie Database
- U.S. Olympic Trials Statistics Site

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #4



TEM/27B-7

MEMORANDUM

FILE COPY

DAT /08.

PHONE: 55-0199.

FROM: Sgt. Tom Barclay,
LAPD.

TO: Infectious Outbreak Desk,
CDC.

We are requesting your assistance for analysis of the enclosed blood sample from an infectious disease or biohazard perspective. This sample was taken from the home of James Chang, age 17. Mr. Chang was found decapitated and torn to pieces in his bedroom, almost as though he was the victim of a bomb blast. However, no signs of explosives were found. He had been seen earlier in the day by his parents, Robert and Emily Chang, both respected local physicians. His girlfriend, London Sinclair, age 17, admitted in an interview that she had visited James in his bedroom, about an hour before he was discovered. However, she was ruled out as a suspect simply because no human agency could have forensically caused this crime scene. The splash patterns are suggestive of an explosion, but in addition, it seems as though the crime scene was tampered with, as fragments of the body seem to have been moved over an extended period of time. It makes no sense.

LAPD/CDC/08/112381-ER-TB

PHLEBOTOMY INVESTIGATOR HANDOUT #5

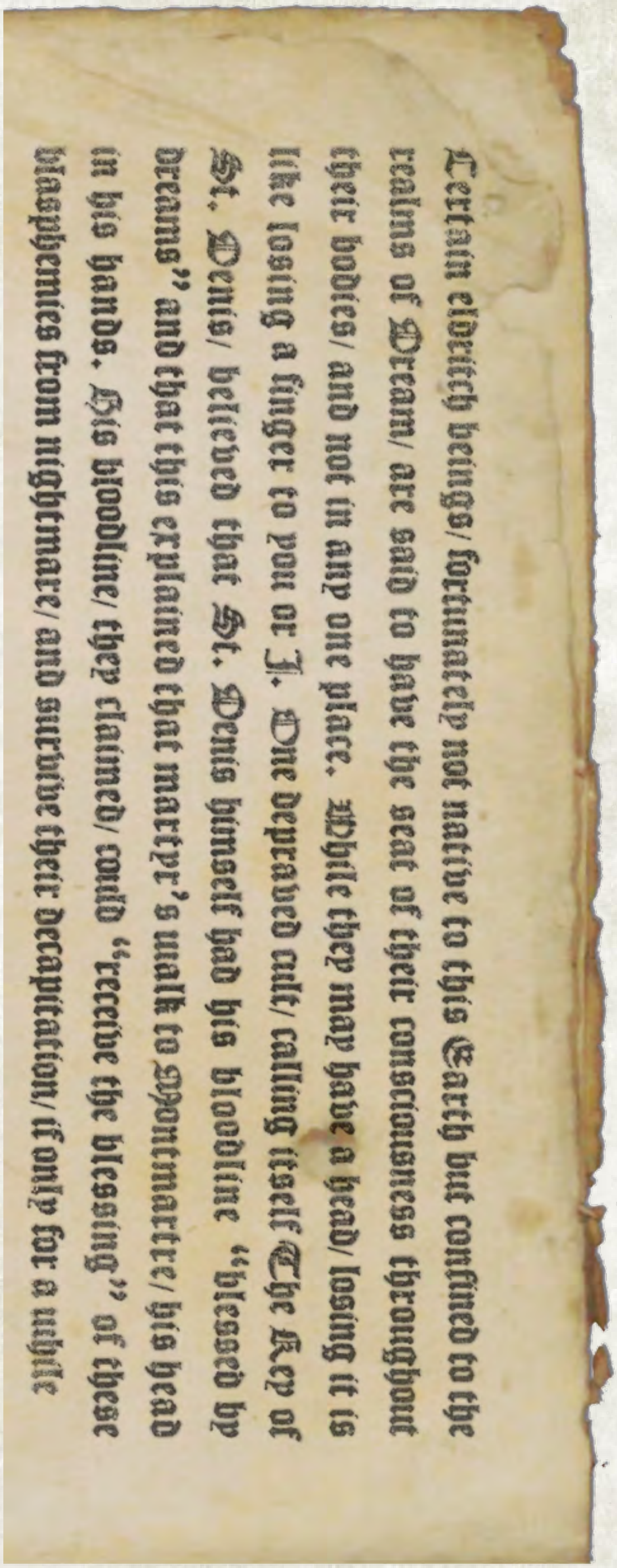
A SYNOPSIS OF LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE ABOUT SURVIVING WITHOUT ONE'S HEAD

There are numerous legends about cephalophores—people able to carry their own heads around after they are decapitated, or who seem none the worse for wear afterwards. Often, they are saints (like St. Denis) or musically inclined heroes (like Orpheus). They are also a part of Celtic mythology (replicated in the tale of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight). Examples include:

- The Green Knight, whose head is struck from his shoulders but who is not bothered by it in the least, returning a year and a day later to return the blow.
- Saint Denis, the patron saint of Paris, who after his martyrdom by beheading, picked up his head and walked two miles to Montmartre, to where he wanted to be buried. Similar stories appertain to Saint Aphrodisius of Béziers (whose head jumped out of a well and rolled back to his body), and Saint Nicasius of Rheims, Saint Just, Saint Ginés de la Jara, Saint Firmin, Saint Minias, the siblings Saints Felix and Regula, Saint Exuperantius, Saint Valerie, Saints Maxien, Lucien, and Julian, Saint Cheron and Saint Osyth, and Saint Paul of Tarsus. The Golden Legend of St. Paul claims that at his execution, "[a]s soon as his head bounded from his body, it intoned, in Hebrew and in a clear voice, 'Jesus Christ.'"

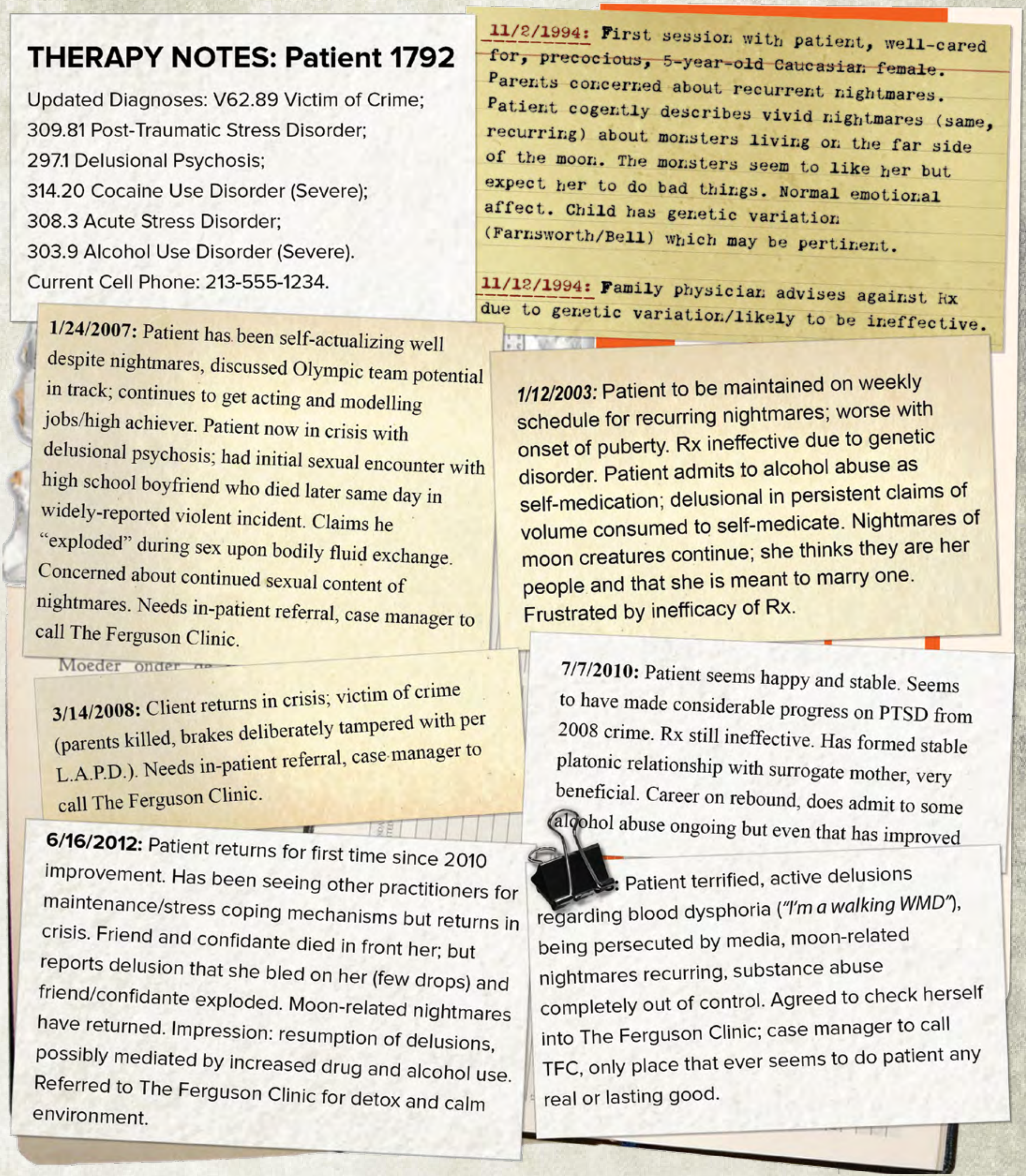
Aristotle goes on for some length (for some unstated reason) to discredit the idea that a severed head could survive or talk. The singing, disembodied head of Orpheus was a familiar tale in Greek myth.

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #6



Certain eldritch beings/ fortunately not native to this Earth but confined to the
realms of Dream/ are said to have the seat of their consciousness throughout
their bodies/ and not in any one place. While they may have a head/ losing it is
like losing a finger to you or I. One depraved cult/ calling itself The Key of
St. Denis/ believed that St. Denis himself had his bloodline "blessed by
dreams" and that this explained that martyr's walk to Montmartre/ his head
in his hands. His bloodline/ they claimed/ could "receive the blessing" of these
blasphemies from nightmare/ and survive their decapitation/ if only for a while

Phlebotomy Investigator Handout #7



THERAPY NOTES: Patient 1792

Updated Diagnoses: V62.89 Victim of Crime;
309.81 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder;
297.1 Delusional Psychosis;
314.20 Cocaine Use Disorder (Severe);
308.3 Acute Stress Disorder;
303.9 Alcohol Use Disorder (Severe).
Current Cell Phone: 213-555-1234.

11/2/1994: First session with patient, well-cared for, precocious, 5-year-old Caucasian female. Parents concerned about recurrent nightmares. Patient cogently describes vivid nightmares (same, recurring) about monsters living on the far side of the moon. The monsters seem to like her but expect her to do bad things. Normal emotional affect. Child has genetic variation (Farnsworth/Bell) which may be pertinent.

11/12/1994: Family physician advises against Rx due to genetic variation/likely to be ineffective.

1/12/2003: Patient to be maintained on weekly schedule for recurring nightmares; worse with onset of puberty. Rx ineffective due to genetic disorder. Patient admits to alcohol abuse as self-medication; delusional in persistent claims of volume consumed to self-medicate. Nightmares of moon creatures continue; she thinks they are her people and that she is meant to marry one. Frustrated by inefficacy of Rx.

1/24/2007: Patient has been self-actualizing well despite nightmares, discussed Olympic team potential in track; continues to get acting and modelling jobs/high achiever. Patient now in crisis with delusional psychosis; had initial sexual encounter with high school boyfriend who died later same day in widely-reported violent incident. Claims he "exploded" during sex upon bodily fluid exchange. Concerned about continued sexual content of nightmares. Needs in-patient referral, case manager to call The Ferguson Clinic.

Moeder onder

3/14/2008: Client returns in crisis; victim of crime (parents killed, brakes deliberately tampered with per L.A.P.D.). Needs in-patient referral, case manager to call The Ferguson Clinic.

7/7/2010: Patient seems happy and stable. Seems to have made considerable progress on PTSD from 2008 crime. Rx still ineffective. Has formed stable platonic relationship with surrogate mother, very beneficial. Career on rebound, does admit to some alcohol abuse ongoing but even that has improved

6/16/2012: Patient returns for first time since 2010 improvement. Has been seeing other practitioners for maintenance/stress coping mechanisms but returns in crisis. Friend and confidante died in front her; but reports delusion that she bled on her (few drops) and friend/confidante exploded. Moon-related nightmares have returned. Impression: resumption of delusions, possibly mediated by increased drug and alcohol use. Referred to The Ferguson Clinic for detox and calm environment.

: Patient terrified, active delusions regarding blood dysphoria (*"I'm a walking WMD"*), being persecuted by media, moon-related nightmares recurring, substance abuse completely out of control. Agreed to check herself into The Ferguson Clinic; case manager to call TFC, only place that ever seems to do patient any real or lasting good.